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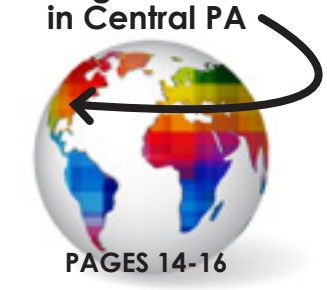

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FREE

SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER 2015

Marriage Is the Law...

By Frank Pizzoli

With all the shouting over on same-sex marriage, now what?

After the US Supreme Court's June 26 ruling requiring states to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples or recognize other state's same-sex marriages, activists have looked for the "pivot," the word of the day as they set sights on closing remaining gaps in basic LGBT civil rights.

Recent history tells us that Pennsylvania's same-sex marriage ban was overturned in May, 2014 by Nixon appointee U.S. District Judge John E. Jones III. At the time, beleaguered state Attorney General Kathleen Kane, with her own legal problems popping up in a legal whack-a-mole, called the law unconstitutional. She refused to mount a defense.

The ban became law in 1996 under the tutelage of then-Gov. Tom Ridge, who eventually "evolved" to support marriage equality. At the time of the overturning, Pennsylvania was the last remaining state in the Northeast still outlawing gay marriage. What's important to remember is that the right of state residents to marry is the result of a court decision, not an intentional act by the General Assembly to provide a basic civil right.

Martin

Ted Martin, executive director, Equality PA said about the high court's decision, "It's a truly great day when every person in America is treated equally when it comes to marrying the person they love." However, he called the victory "bittersweet, because, as most Pennsylvanians are shocked to learn, it is still legal in our state to be fired from your job, turned away from a business, or evicted from an apartment just because of who you are or who you love."

Moving forward, the pivot for Equality PA is to make their first priority an "update our discrimination laws to be sure that all people, including LGBT people, are protected from all kinds of discrimination," Martin says. He is referring to a set of twin measures - House Bill 300 and Senate Bill 300 - that now languish in the legislature.

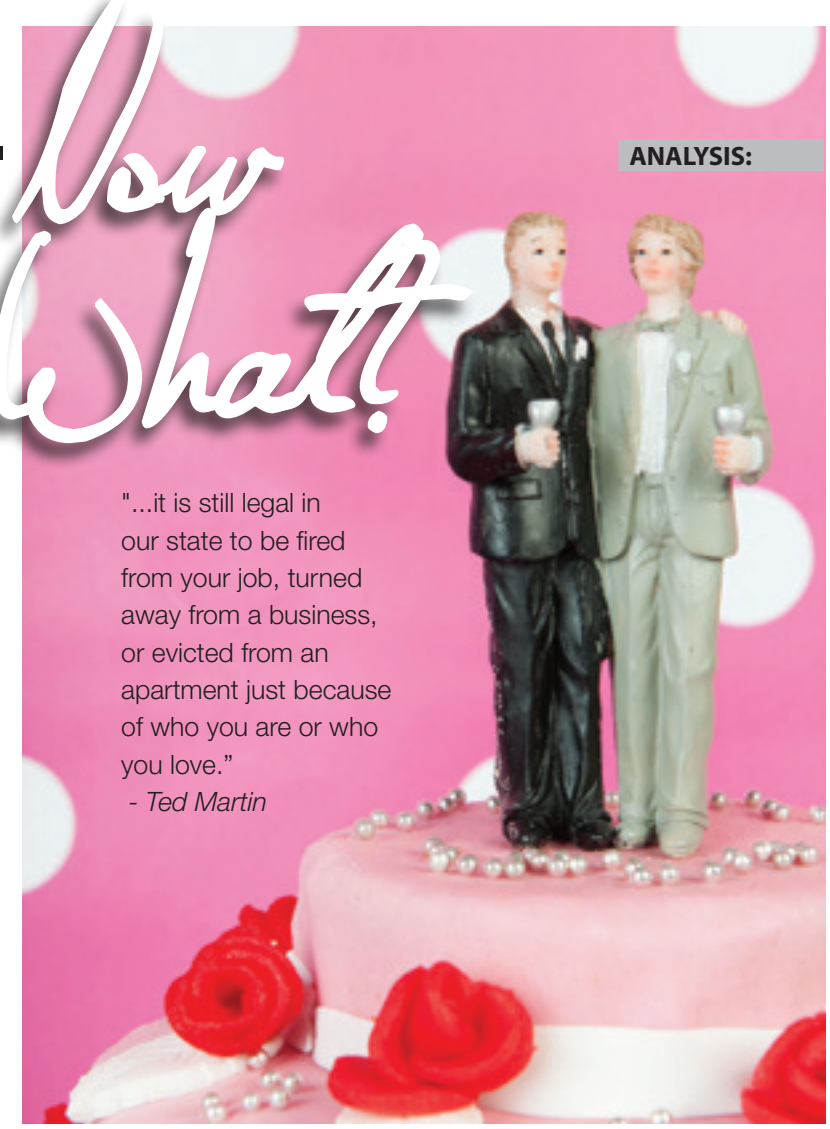
Essentially, the proposed legislation* eliminates the situations Martin describes by amending the PA Human Relations Act to include definitions of "sexual orientation" and "gender identity or expression" such that LGBT taxpayers would be free from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. The measures also prohibits certain discriminatory real estate practices.

Although legislative movement is stymied, the bills have the support of PNC Financial Services Group, Inc., Alcoa, American Eagle Outfitters, Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney, Pittsburgh Technology Council, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and Sellers Dorsey. The Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the York

Continued on page 26

ANALYSIS:

Now What!



"...it is still legal in our state to be fired from your job, turned away from a business, or evicted from an apartment just because of who you are or who you love."

- Ted Martin

PA Native Holds DNC Post

Meloy

By Central Voice

"What Republican presidential candidates might say about LGBT issues would not surprise me," says Pennsylvania native Sean Meloy. He is originally from the Pittsburgh area and graduated from Penn State University.

The Democratic National Committee recently hired the former congressional staffer and campaign manager as its new director of LGBT Engagement.

Meloy will help organize gay support for the 2016 Democratic presidential nominee and Democratic candidates throughout the country. In all, the member DNC LGBT Caucus has 36 members from around the country.

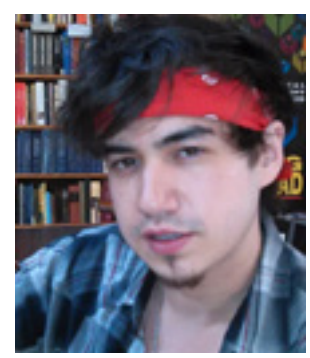
"We'll be working at all levels - nationally, within states, and with

Continued on page 6

HARRISBURG:

Time for a Socialist City Council Member?

By Frank Pizzoli



Siennick

What is to be done?

That's the question Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin asked in a his 1902 political pamphlet. One hundred and thirteen years later, local activist Chris Siennick proposes an answer - a Socialist candidate for Harrisburg City Council.

Siennick, 25, is running a "write-in" campaign for one of the four seats up for grabs in November's General Election.

Active locally in Black Lives Matter and This Stops Today Harrisburg advocacy within the city, he has spent many hours reading on both sides of the political spectrum, from Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* to Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*.

A campaign flyer lists his key issues: eliminating racism, establishing-

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Crossing the viral divide pg 11

Homophobe lives to regret pg 6

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Political Update

• Pitcairn Islands legalizes same-sex marriage

The islands are inhabited by the descendants of the Bounty mutineers and the Tahitians (or Polynesians) who accompanied them, an event retold in numerous books and films. This history is still apparent in the surnames of many of the islanders. With only about 56 inhabitants, originating from four main families, Pitcairn is the least populous national jurisdiction in the world.

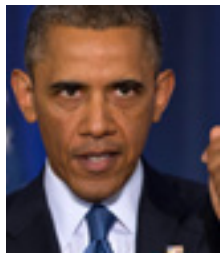
• Kenya Mounts 5,000 Naked Protestors

Buzzfeed's Lester Feder reports that a fringe political party in Kenya will show President Barack Obama its disapproval of his support for LGBT rights by holding a protest of 5,000 "totally naked" party members. "Our very objective is that Obama can see from a distance the difference between a man and woman," said Vincent Kidaha, leader of the Republican Liberty Party during an interview with Nairobi News. Though Kidaha's party has no members in Parliament, it has won international attention because the party has submitted an anti-LGBT law to Parliament that includes punishments of life in prison for Kenyans convicted of homosexuality and stoning to death for foreigners. The legislation has not advanced. Kidaha informed the police of his planned protest. "The procession shall be carried out by approximately 5,000 totally naked men and women to protest over the United States of America President Barack Obama's open and aggressive support for Homosexuality," the letter explained.

• Vietnam's Gay Power Couple

Since their December arrival in Vietnam, U.S. Ambassador Ted Osius, left, and his husband Clayton Bond, have become the most prominent gay couple in the Southeast Asian country. Osius and Clayton Bond landed with their toddler son shortly before the government abolished its ban on same-sex marriage. Now the couple, who recently adopted an infant girl, find themselves ambassadors of the nascent LGBT rights movement spreading across the country. "A lot of young people have reached out to me on Facebook, to say: 'We are happy to see somebody who is gay and is happy in his personal life but also has had professional success,'" Osius said in an interview. "I don't think of it as advocating as much as supporting Vietnamese civil society in doing what it is already doing." On the evening of July 31, Osius and Bond attended the kick-off of Hanoi's Viet Pride weekend, which featured a bicycle rally through the heart of the city.

• Obama meets Kenyan LGBT advocates



As part of his trip to Kenya, President Obama on July 26 met with several Kenyan LGBT rights advocates. The advocates were among about 70 members of Kenyan civil society who attended a "town hall" with Obama in Nairobi. The official did not identify the LGBT rights advocates who attended the meeting that lasted for nearly an hour. The meeting took place a day after Obama challenged Kenya's LGBT rights record during a press conference with President Uhuru Kenyatta. "With respect to the rights of gays and lesbians, I've been consistent all across Africa on this," said Obama in response to a question from Reuters reporter Jeff Mason. "I believe in the principle of treating people equally under the law. And they are deserving of equal treatment under the law and the state should not discriminate based on their sexual orientation." Kenyatta during a press conference said "the issue of gay rights is really a non-issue" in his country.

• European Court calls for recognition

The European Court of Human Rights has ruled that international human rights law requires governments to provide legal recognition for same-sex couples. The decision came in a lawsuit called Oliari and Others v. Italy. It was brought by three same-sex couples against the government of Italy, which is the only country in Western Europe that has no legal recognition for same-sex couples. This is the first time that the court has ruled that partnership recognition is a right under the European Convention on Human Rights, and it is technically binding not only throughout all of the European Union but also to countries hostile to LGBT rights that have signed onto the European Convention on Human Rights such as Russia and Turkey. However, countries including Russia and the United Kingdom have disregarded certain rulings of the court despite the treaty obligations.

• Kyrgyzstan advances 'Gay Propaganda' bill

The bill, even more draconian than Russia's, has received the second of three necessary approvals by Kyrgyz lawmakers. The bill would would criminalize so-called gay propaganda, and apply harsher penalties than a similar law in Russia. The former Soviet republic's national legislative body recently approved the bill by a vote of 90-2, Agence France-Presse reports. Final legislative action is expected in October. The measure is supported by Kyrgyz president Almazbeec Atambayev.

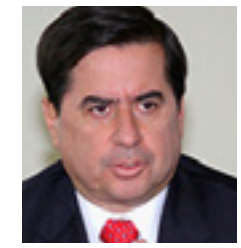
• Mozambique officially makes gay sex legal

New law will make clear that security measures cannot be taken against those who engage in "vices against nature". The southern African nation of Mozambique has officially been added to the list of countries with no law against same-sex relations. Legislators revised the penal code that allowed "security measures" to be taken against people "who habitually engage in vices against nature". This code was used to discriminate against and prosecute LGBTI people that could have sent them to a workhouse for up to three years. Called a hangover from when it was colonized by the Portguese, the law was rarely enforced and it was considered by many to be a meaningless clause in the statute books. Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique has said: 'The new Penal Code sweeps away a great deal of the musty colonial legacy, including the mention of "vices against nature".

• Poland approve transgender rights bill

Polish lawmakers have passed a bill allowing transgender individuals to legally change their gender without medical intervention. By a vote of 252-158, the lower house of the Polish Parliament approved the Gender Accordance Act that transgender MP Anna Grodzka first introduced in 2012. The measure requires those who want to legally change gender are unmarried Polish citizens. They must provide proof from a doctor or other medical provider that they are "a person of a different gender identity than the gender legally assigned." A court in the city of Lodz would then consider their application. Trans-Fuzja Foundation, a Polish trans advocacy group, said the court would grant the request within three months without requiring the petitioner to undergo hormone therapy or other medical intervention. The Gender Accordance Act does not address citizenship, health care, parental rights, divorce and other trans-specific issues.

• Columbian Cartel?



A top Columbian cabinet minister has that country's courts to legalize same-sex marriage and support the right of such couples to adopt. Interior Minister Juan Fernando Cristo noted the recent decision by the U.S. Supreme Court allowing same-sex marriage. "Equality is unstoppable and equality also will come to Colombia," Cristo said as thousands from Colombia's LGBT community staged a gay price march last June in the capital. Columbian gay couples can enter civil unions thanks to a series of Constitutional Court rulings. It was unclear whether the minister's appeal to the courts reflected the views of President Juan Manuel Santos' administration, which has not pushed for any legislation on the matter. Colombia's congress, like much of the South American nation's population, is very conservative and it is unlikely that legislation allowing same-sex marriages would ever be adopted by lawmakers.

• Mozambique officially makes gay sex legal

The southern African nation of Mozambique has officially been added to the list of countries with no law against same-sex relations. Legislators specifically revised the nation's penal code that allowed "security measures" to be taken against people "who habitually engage in vices against nature". This was used to discriminate against and prosecute LGBTI people that could have sent them to a workhouse for up to three years. A hangover from when it was colonized for the Portguese, the law was rarely enforced and it was considered by many to be a meaningless clause in the statute books.

• Raising Dakota in Spain

Spain has raised the minimum age for marriage from 14 to 16 to boost protection of minors and bring the country in line with its European neighbors. Spanish law had previously allowed boys and girls to marry at 14 with permission from a judge. It was one of lowest minimum ages in the European Union, with most members setting it at 16. The change follows recommendations from United Nations and child protection groups and is expected to affect few. Over the past 14 years fewer than 365 Spanish citizens under 16 have married. In France, the minimum age for marriage was raised from 15 to 18 in 2006, although judges can allow couples to marry younger in exceptional circumstances, such as pregnancy. Spain also raised the minimum age for consent to sexual relations from 13 to 16, which it has been repeatedly asked to do by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Council of Europe. Carlos Martínez-Almeida, president of advocacy group Childhood Platform told news agency Europa Press that the marriage law, "expands the protection of children in Spain, preventing abuse against minors by adults, facilitating the fight against pedophilia and forced marriages, and making national legislation more coherent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

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publisher's voice

Finally, do all lives matter?

Frank Pizzoli

A while back I'd gotten into a discussion that turned into a scolding. I had a finger wagged into my face backed by a loud voice. I'd suggested that all the oppressed people in the US work together against common oppressors and institutional structures that keep them all down. That's what lit the fuse. I proposed that poor is poor, discrimination is discrimination, and being treated as *other* is subhuman for all treat that way.

What I didn't say was that all forms or histories of various oppressions were or are identical. Yes, oppression affects different segments of our population in disproportionate ways. The gay, black Staten Island caterer who says cops last month (on video) took him down in his front yard, beat him while calling him a "fag" and "faggot" indeed has allegedly gone through what most white men will not in their lifetime. More young black men are involved in police violence that often leads to their death than young white guys.

To say that we will work together to end discrimination is not to diminish the historical forms discrimination has taken or to claim they are all the same. It is a suggestion, a tactic, to think about working together. The goal is not to homogenize or minimize or appropriate the various ways discrimination hurts different people. If a variety of egregious events - from being shot and killed, beat up, bullied or raped - effects a variety of groups in various degrees why not cooperate to end the misery? To cooperate doesn't mean we minimize each others oppressions.

That's when the "Oppression Olympics" began.

The finger wager's poor was poorer than the poverty of others. The oppression was deeper. And therein lies the difficulty with advocates and fellow travelers having these discussions.

For example, when someone talks about oppression, there is always someone in the room who had it worse, if that's the ruler by which we measure things. I think we should respectfully acknowledge all oppressed people, not string them along in a line of human experience from worst to least.

For me, a hungry kid in the US, and there are many, is just as hungry today as his counterpart in sub-Sahara Africa - but that usually leads to someone counting up the days each child has been hungry to prove how one is hungrier than the other. Oppression Olympics.

Me, I just want us to come together. To agree that hunger - all the oppressions of economic disenfranchisement, lousy or no health care, bad schools, police brutality - in today's world is stupid. Let's get busy. Connecting the dots between and among structures that keep tummies empty will reveal the culprits. And rest assured they love when we play "Oppression Olympics" at street level. That's their way of keeping us busy while they keep on keepin' on with their anti-human practices.

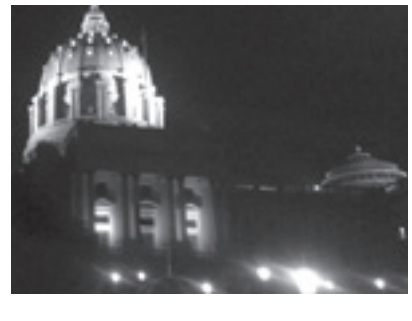
There are other examples that make my point.

Take the examples of Sandra Bland and Jesse Jacobs at the hands of Texas prison officials which suggests the system did not value either of them in much the same way. Both are dead. Jesse Jacobs, 32, died March 13 after suffering a seizure and being rushed to the hospital from the Galveston County Jail. News of Jacobs' death comes on the heels of the controversy over the death of African-American woman Sandra Bland, who committed suicide in the Waller County, Texas, jail after being arrested during a routine traffic stop. Jacobs reportedly was detoxing from Xanax, which he'd been taking for 10 years to treat anxiety disorder. From reports so far, it doesn't sound like Bland or Jacobs were treated respectfully. Is there any useful purpose in arguing who was "Most Oppressed"? Would we do better by working together with the "structures" that allow for such dismal outcomes?

That's why some activists prefer Policy Politics. By that I mean ANY life not valued by the ruling paradigm is valued and included in any policy effort to create change. Inclusion is not appropriation. The inclusion of all the lives that matter and are excluded can be reflected in "policies". That way the street level exercise is not one of playing Totem Pole and trying to get to the top as Most Aggrieved or Excluded. Poor is poor. Hated is hated. Other is other. When we fight each other we prolong the power of those holding the levers of global economics while diminishing our own. *All Lives Matter.*

All Lives Matter

May 2 about 50 people marched from the steps of the State Capitol through midtown Harrisburg. They were supporting the actions of those in Baltimore after the death of Freddie Gray two weeks earlier. His death, while in police custody, sparked riots and activism across the country. The rally was organized by the Harrisburg community action group This Stops Today Harrisburg. "We're here standing with Baltimore showing them that they're not the only ones going through the struggle," rally organizer Bleu Zerbe said. "We're standing up for ourselves in Harrisburg in support of them."Antoine Cameron, of Harrisburg, holds a sign reading "ALL Lives Matter" at a rally.



Change Does Happen

By Central Voice

On the top left is art image produced by *Central Voice* many years ago depicting a rainbow flag behind the state capital dome, illustrating what needed to happen in Pennsylvania - *Queer the State*, meaning that as a state we needed to address the basic civil rights issues faced by LGBT taxpayers and their families. Anticipating objections from our detractors, no, *Queering the State* doesn't mean you have to turn gay. It means you have to understand that your belief system - religious or political - doesn't rule the day. You don't get to force your rules into everyone's life. Only your life. If you think homosexuality is wrong, then don't be a homo. It doesn't sound like a good idea for you. If you think same-sex marriage is wrong, then don't marry someone of the same sex.

On the bottom right is a photo from the night of July 25, when Central PA Pride Festival was held and the front of the capital building was illuminated with rainbow-hued spotlights. The imagery did not go unnoticed. Marriage equality is accomplished, although not by our Legislature but by the court which overruled the state's 1996 ban. Our next challenge is to pass House Bill 300 and Senate Bill 300, or whatever this legislation morphs into, to provide for protections in employment and in public accommodations.

RESPONSE:

Why Event is Called York Equality

By Carla Christopher, Lead Organizer, Equality Fest, Executive Board Member

In the light of our second York Equality Fest on Aug. 2, people have asked me Why an Equality Fest rather than just an LGBT Pride?

Our first year was an understandable celebration of the court overturning Pennsylvania's same-sex marriage ban. Plus, marriage equality recently became the law of the land nationally, but because it was already the law here, what else has changed for Pennsylvanians, really? In a handful of years, everything. And that's why bringing the celebration to the forefront is worthwhile.

Equality Fest is a celebratory gathering of traditionally marginalized communities, many still fighting for equal rights in wages, housing, economic or educational opportunity and more.

It would be easy to feel discouraged or cynical when looking at the work still to be done, when we see the struggle for unity and understanding erupting across the national headlines. But we also see cooperation between minority and marginalized groups.

Together, we become a powerful majority and a force to be reckoned with. Stronger united than if we worked separately. Equality Fest brings together artists and hipsters, political activists and community organizers, independent businesses legal, medical and community and life resources. It reminds people through the diversity on display that THIS is Pennsylvania in 2015 and of the rapidly approaching future.

The event shatters stereotypes through bringing together a progressive and dynamic network of communities in a region we are blessed to call home. This home is worth fighting for, worth organizing in and worth inviting the region, nation, and the world to see.

This is TRUE Equality: A local pin-up model and a half-Latino power poet from Reading dance the bachata. A Native American drag queen does a cartwheel in the middle of the street as a thrilled crowd of African-American children cheer. One of York's most highly regarded fine artists, a dynamic gay man, dabs the final bold strokes of oil paint on a live painted portrait of Janice Joplin before an admiring cluster of art lovers. This is Equality.

Bonnie Hull-Deck said, "There were so many talented artists there. I loved the bands. I met some really friendly people who just came up to me and starting talking. It was a very fun. Peace and happiness shined around. I love the connecting with others."

Pennsylvania state representatives, city councilmen, the State Physician General and other well known political faces pose for portraits with admiring political club volunteers. Young Democrats playfully vie with Equality PA volunteers for petition signatures. York's County Democratic Party waves a clipboard in the air showing off their 10th registered voter before getting back to work. An army of churchgoers in boldly colored t-shirts arrive with an arsenal of children's activities and packs of skittles after morning services conclude. This is Equality.

Annalisa Gojmerac said, "Loved it! Was happy to see Route 30 Seafood there. We love their food! Loved seeing all the different types of people, wish more were there, loved the bouncy tent for kids of all ages, I can easily see this getting bigger and bigger every year."

National nonprofit and community organizations like N.O.W. and the Y.W.C.A. swap business cards with local urban population serving clinics doing H.I.V. testing. Curious south-siders wander in and out of tiny art galleries. Models meet neon art body painters. Dazzlingly beautiful young women wearing shiny bruises and roller derby t-shirts skate through the crowd as a magician swallows a balloon. An enthusiastic debate erupts between Smoothie King and Rita's Italian Ice devotees.

"Amazing venue! Perfect location, minimized traffic hindrance while providing a gorgeous community interactive back drop! Wow, what a beauty," said Ronny Gomez.

A wedding expo happened inside the decorated, newly refurbished Bond Building, special events venue, which held its first wedding ever on Aug. 3. A gender-free group ceremony in which couples were gifted with donations from local boutique shops and congratulated by local politicians.

A street festival took over the afternoon with a stage that hosted Reggae, Latin, Pop and R&B bands mixed with female impersonators and spoken word poets. A food court served everything from seafood to Barbecue to Healthy World Cafe locally sourced artisan dishes.

A fine art fair and open galleries dominated one side of the street while the other side boasted information on community resources. Customers toured a pop-up marketplace for everything from hand blown-glass and tie-dye to pink and purple tasers for women. A family area had activities, games, storytellers and balloon animal makers surrounding a Tumble Bus and an Atomic Bounce House. Everything was free and open to the public and everyone there willing to brave the 90 plus degree heat was in an obvious mood for joyful cooperation.

So why an Equality Fest then, and not just an LGBT Pride? Because while we scrappy Yorkers have a celebratory spirit and sense of "Pride" in how far we have come, it is important to us to give special honor to how far we still have to go. We want to ensure no festival attendee forgets for a moment that there are still battles to be fought, frontiers to be conquered and citizen rights to be protected, granted or restored. We are a practical, "boots-to-the-ground" type of group, and while we are singing, dancing and snacking, we will also be lobbying, petitioning and service-giving; not just for the LGBT community, but for ALL the traditionally marginalized communities that the LGBT community exists in. If there is a human being affected, then it involves us, and we will be there.

ARE PA LGBT CIVIL RIGHTS A CIRCUS?
MANDATORY LGBT SCHOOL CURRICULA
BULLYING LAWS
TRANSGENDER LICENSE ID
PA Marriage Equality LEGISLATIVE BAN
PA Marriage Equality BAN COURTS OVERTURNED
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BRAD GEBHART

Homophobe Picks The Wrong Fight

by Kyler Geoffroy, Towerload

A homophobe picked the wrong gay couple to mess with at a Manhattan bodega over the weekend and reportedly ended up fleeing covered in his own blood.

Larry Lennox-Choate and Daniel Lennox-Choate, who in 2013 became the first gay men to be married at West Point Military Academy, were shopping in SoHo on Sunday when a 40-year-old man came up and began shouting anti-gay slurs. The homophobe's big mistake though was throwing a punch at Daniel, leading Larry to step in and put the man in his place.

"He left covered in his own blood with his tail between his legs after I handled the situation and tossed him in the street like the coward loser he is," wrote Larry on Facebook. "We refuse to be victims and are thankful we can defend ourselves, but are saddened by the fact that idiots like this guy might not pick two guys who went through Plebe Boxing next time."

Larry said that the hate crimes division of the NYPD is investigating. Thomas Clabough, 57, was arrested Aug. 12 and charged with assault and attempted assault as a hate crime.

Larry Lennox-Choate (left) and Daniel Lennox-Choate

Socialist on City Council? *cont'd from page one*

a police review board, decriminalization of Cannabis, abolishment of property, and Socialist programs he believes will benefit the people such as publically owned Internet access and public 3D printers.

Although a long shot, a Socialist win at the polls is not impossible.

In 1910 in nearby Reading, James Hudson Maurer's pulled off a Socialist victory at the polls with election to the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives. The cycle ended in 1943 with J. Henry Stump's third election as Mayor of Reading. In the intervening years, the Reading Socialists gained seats on the city council and the school board in addition to capturing various other city and county offices.

"I'm a socialist because I've had enough of the rampant income inequality and the lack of democratic access affected individuals have in the political process," Siennick says.

His brand of Socialism is not that of Lenin, or the murderous Stalin. Siennick's envisions a traditional, post-World War II "mixed economy" allowing for a mix of government spending and free enterprise, as opposed to "pro-business" which means your lobbyists put in the fix for your business. "If you think government spending doesn't help the economy, then why do historians agree that World War II pulled us out of the Great Depression? he muses. "Government funds built the nation's Interstate highway system. Who would argue that didn't fiercely fuel the economy?"

He's also anti-war.

"My father is an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran," Siennick explains. He organized protests against the war during the time his father "left my family to fight for something that didn't make much sense to me."

While in Washington, DC ten years ago, he discovered the 1960s anti-war group Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), reactivated in recent years on college campuses. "They add a hip element to their demonstrations--notably "Funk The War" roving dance parties with bicycle charioted amplifiers," Siennick says. He started a still active chapter in Central Dauphin High School.

Siennick is not a cynic.

Socialism was always "a dirty word to my family," he says. In high school he began reading "really big books, much different than my peers. I thought that Brave New World and 1984 wasn't enough hard information for me." He moved onto detailed sociological analysis like Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* and Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations,* and Anarchist philosophers and 20th Century political figures like Emma Goldman, who was involved in Pennsylvania's June, 1892 Homestead Strike, when a steel plant owned by Andrew Carnegie drew national attention much like Harrisburg's recent dismal fiscal history. Following a strike, Pinkerton guards were hired to protect the plant resulting in seven guards and nine strikers being killed.

Political history intrigues Siennick.

"I found out who that famous guy on the T-shirts was, Che Guevara," he says, reading his journals before, during, and after the Cuban Revolution," He says. "If anything really grounded me in the comfort of calling myself a 'socialist' or 'anarchist' in hostile America, it was starting to apply the principles of the philosophy to my everyday life," Siennick explains. He founded Harrisburg's Food Not Bombs chapter while still in high school. On Monday nights, the group faithfully cooks dinners for homeless people and serves the meals to a downtown location.

Even with having read yards of political tracts, Siennick tries not to be an egghead.

He cites the dictionary definition of socialism: a political and economic theory of social organization that advocates that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned or regulated by the community as a whole. "I know that's not an eighth-grade reading level. I want to break the definition into easily digestible ideas as we go along," he says.

Digestible areas for Siennick are race and the environment.

"I notice things like racism--the structural way that America has kept Black America in areas that receive little help. Or how my school had (and may still have) a very serious case of segregation districting," Siennick explains. He notes "corporate disregard for human rights and the environment, especially when a gold mining corporation threatened to strip mine my family's home island in the Philippines," where he participated with the Association of Students Against Mining (or ASAM), a multilevel campaign "that thankfully succeeded against many odds."

Game change

Siennick calls for game change."Let's break 'game change,' a term for access and economics is the exchange of goods and necessities," he asks. The current 'game' or paradigm is: Our city has a few major industries and those are warehousing, shipping, and distribution, the state as Harrisburg is our capital city, and businesses that require direct access to the capitol, the service industry, and the prison and probation industry.

About 70% of city residents are renters and do not own property. The usual figure is 60%.

Siennick outlines that "drug use is rampant in certain sections of the city, schools are shut down, our roads will wreck your car one of these days and you won't be happy about it. We have significant unemployment."

"What I mean by socioeconomic game change is opening more public property and forcing concessions towards those in or near poverty," he explains. He would like to see more avenues for the city to come together more often, and allowing the people to have more direct access to political power and the supervision of all major power plays in terms of our local economy.

Goals

Sienick has specific goals in terms of economic programs.

Number One is "legislating mandatory employer-provided maternity leave. There are many working pregnant mothers, it's a fight-to-survive right-to-work state here in Pennsylvania."

He doesn't see movements like the Fight for $15 really taking off in Harrisburg. "People are afraid of losing their jobs or their employers folding their businesses so I would like to set a fair example that we can cooperate on all levels and give something to the citizens of Harrisburg," Siennick says.

Siennick would also address decriminalizing Cannabis.

Although low-level drug sentences "are a major cash cow for the prison and probation industry, the liberty of the individual is not to be a government and private corporation's goldmine," he says. He calls for "your own easy to grow plants that generate bartering power as allowed in Washington, DC and New Mexico, that's less stress for everybody. I feel as though that the industry is ready for prohibition to be over and really could bolster our cash strapped city in many ways be it medicine, recreation, or the thousands of uses for the hemp plant like hemp concrete," he says.

List of elected socialist mayors in the United States U.S. towns electing Socialist mayors or major officers, 1911–1920

Year	No.	Year	No.
1911	74	1912	8
1913	32	1914	5
1915	22	1916	6
1917	18	1918	2
1919	5	1920	2

Source: James Weinstein, 1967, The Decline of Socialism in America 1912–1925, New York: Monthly Review Press

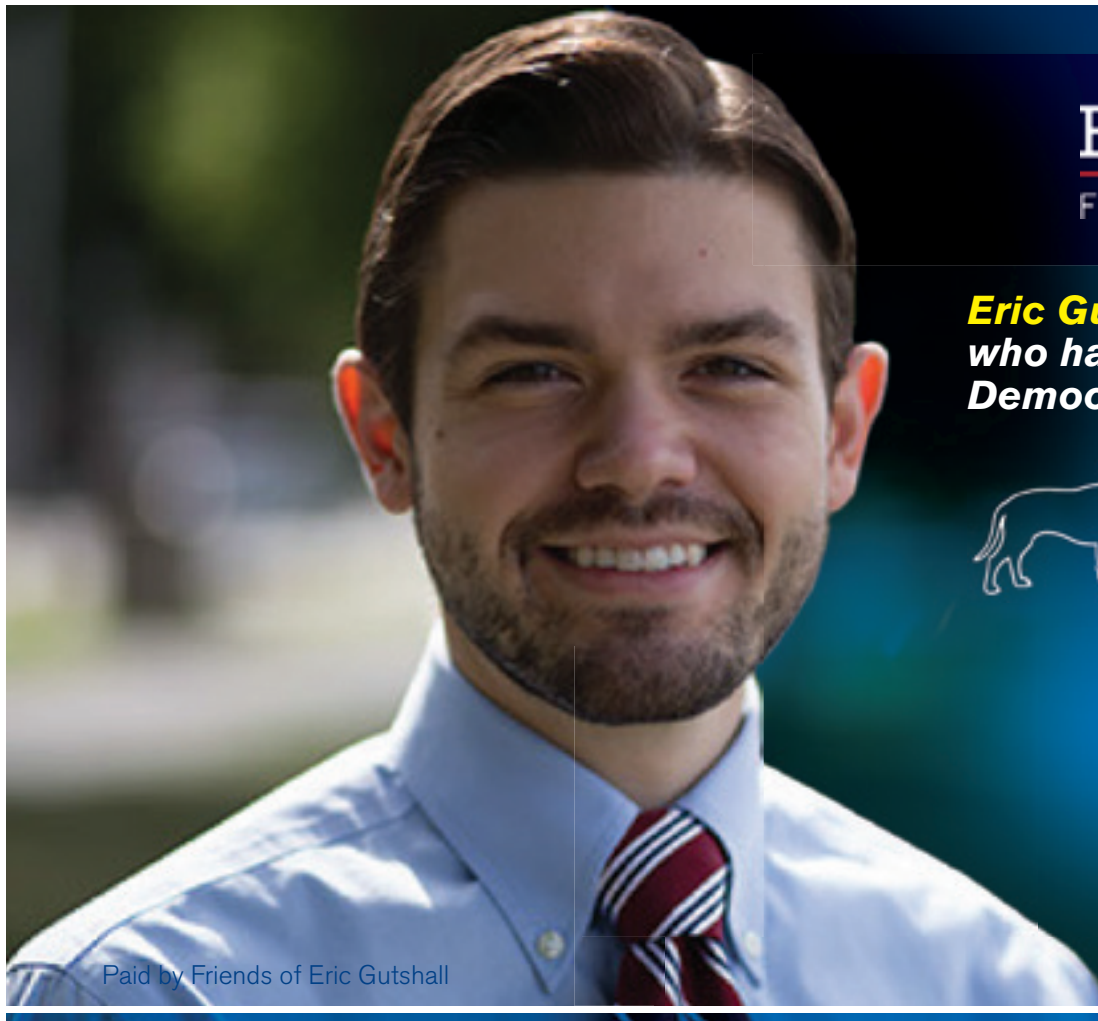
PA Native *cont'd from page one*

local Stonewall Democrat groups," he says. His challenge comes after working as an aide and campaign manager for U.S. Rep. Mike Doyle (D-PA). Where possible within regions and states, Meloy's efforts will roll in with The Victory Fund and the Human Rights Campaign.

Meloy will also play an important role in selection of LGBT delegates to the July, 2016 DNC to held in Philadelphia. Each state decides how to apportion its allotted number between elected and appointed delegates. Regarding delegate totals for 2016 convention, "they are still in flux, but it will be between 5,000 and 6,000," Meloy says.

"Our representation at the convention is vital. Our hard-fought, newly found civil rights can go away fast with the wrong person elected to the White House next round," Meloy cautions. Echoing this season's popular book, *It Ain't Over* by Michael Signorile, Meloy says religious freedom battles and related legal challenges can still undo advances.

Pennsylvania is unique because "it's a big state with lots of rural and suburban tracts anchored by urban populations," Meloy explains. This means there are LGBT people everywhere traveling, working, commuting, spending money, and creating visibility in all congressional and state electoral districts. "If LGBT party activists are out there, we'll find them," he says.



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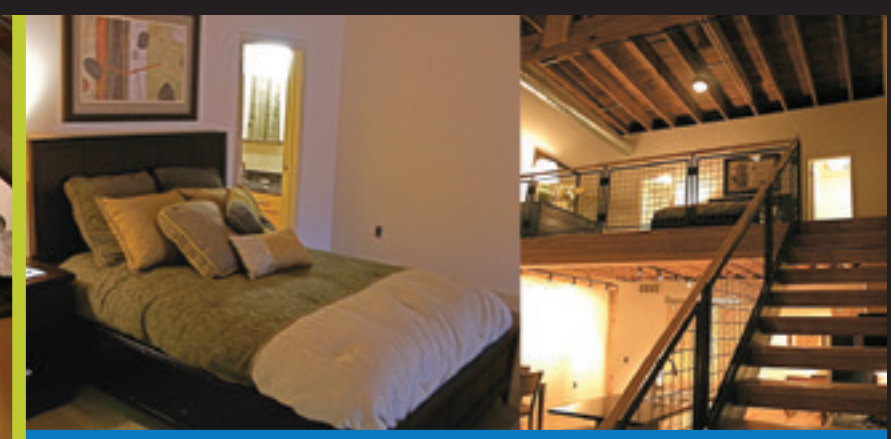

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Family Acceptance during Adolescence Strongest Predictor of Well-Being

The need to prevent stigma-related health risks for LGBT youth and young adults – including mental health, substance abuse, suicide, homelessness and sexual health risks – calls for developing low cost options that promote well-being and increase connectedness. A new study from the Family Acceptance Project that examined the role of family, peers and community support during adolescence on positive adjustment and well-being in LGBT young adults confirms the important role of support – especially family support – for LGBT youth and young adults.

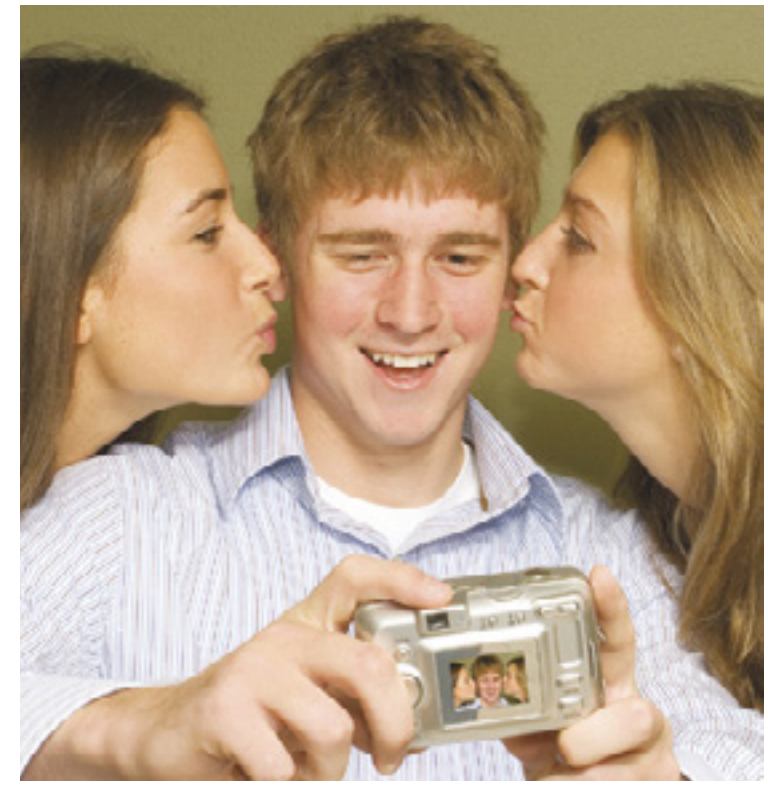
The study, "Social Support Networks for LGBT Young Adults," published in the July issue of Family Relations reports on data from the Family Acceptance Project's young adult survey which examined the relationship between family acceptance and LGBT-positive peer and community support during adolescence with positive adjustment in young adulthood. Conducted in English and Spanish with immigrant and U.S.-born populations, the survey included 245 Latino and non-Latino white LGBT young adults, ages 21 to 25.

Little is known about the relationship between multiple forms of social support for LGBT youth and their well-being in young adulthood. In the current study, researchers found that family, peer, and community support were strong predictors of positive adjustment in young adulthood, including life satisfaction, self-esteem, and sense of self-worth as an LGBT young adult. Being open about one's LGBT identity to more individuals within their social network was highly linked with satisfaction with their life situation and with having positive perceptions of their LGBT identity. However, acceptance by their family during adolescence had the strongest influence on overall adjustment and well-being, compared with other forms of support.

This study points to the need for increasing social support for LGBT young people during childhood and adolescence, starting with education and guidance for parents, families and caregivers; increasing peer-based supports, including school diversity clubs and access to LGBT community resources; and expanding community and public education initiatives to increase awareness, understanding and accurate information about sexual orientation and gender identity and the importance of family and peer support among social institutions, congregations and agencies that serve children, youth and families.

The Family Acceptance Project is a research, intervention, education and policy initiative, affiliated with San Francisco State University.

Info: http://familyproject.sfsu.edu



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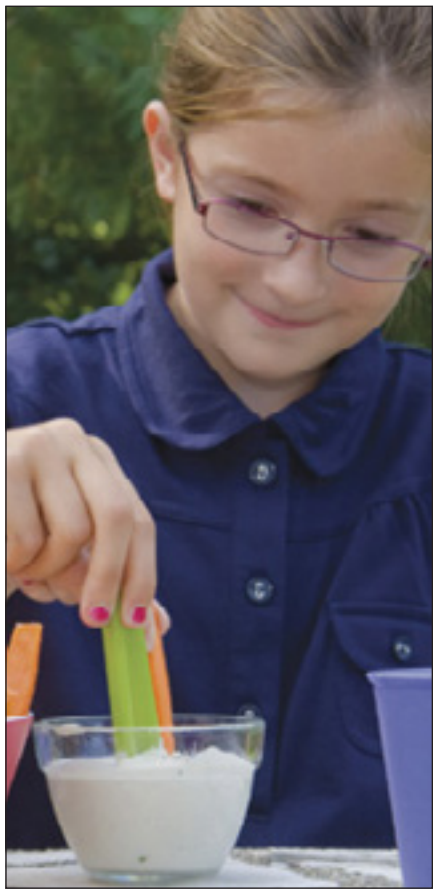
Central Pennsylvania Food Bank Ranked top Notch



Central Pennsylvania Food Bank and Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania are recognized among the nation's best charities.

Charity Navigator, the nation's largest and most-utilized evaluator of charities, has named among its 10 Top Notch Charities list Central Pennsylvania Food Bank and Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania. They are ranked 7 and 9 respectively.

Charity Navigator ranks high-performing charities for excelling in three areas: (1) financial, (2) accountability & transparency and (3) results. The 10 charities ranked not only earn Charity Navigator's highest 4-star rating for their Financial Health, but also earn 4-stars in Accountability & Transparency. The 10 charities on the 10 Top Notch Charities "adhere to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chance of unethical activities and they execute their missions in a fiscally responsible way".

"Feeding Pennsylvania is extremely proud to have two of our members recognized in Charity Navigator's 10 Top-Notch Charities," said Jane Clements-Smith, executive director, Feeding Pennsylvania. "We commend Central Pennsylvania Food Bank and Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania on their excellence in financial health, accountability, and transparency. This honor truly reflects the commitment demonstrated by all of the members of Feeding Pennsylvania who are working to provide food assistance to our neighbors in need."

"It gives me great pride to see that two of the top ten charities that made the list are from our own food bank members at Feeding Pennsylvania," said Kris Douglas, chief executive officer of the Westmoreland County Food Bank, who chairs the Feeding Pennsylvania board of directors. "It is a testament to how we operate both individually and collectively in the fight against hunger in our great state. I congratulate them both on this wonderful achievement!"

Central Pennsylvania Food Bank scored 99.82 and Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania scored 99.80 on Charity Navigator's rating system. The rating system examines two broad areas of a charity's performance; their financial health and their accountability & transparency.

Married Couples: Check Out PA Health Network

When on June 25 the US Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Affordable Care Act, their decision upheld tax credits for millions of Americans. Approximately 81% of the 349,000 PA residents enrolled in the federally-facilitated Marketplace (Healthcare.gov) receive financial assistance to pay their monthly premiums. Without this assistance, these individuals would not be able to afford their insurance and would subsequently lose access to life saving medical care, according to the Pennsylvania Health Access Network, which attended Central PA Pride Festival July 25. They also report that newly-married same-sex couples have 60 days after the legalization of their marriage to sign up and enroll in a health insurance plan. Free, in-person enrollment assistance is available from a Certified Navigator at (877) 570-3642.

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Crossing the Viral Divide

POSITIVE THOUGHTS:

By Diane Anderson-Minshall

It was little surprise when HBO's "Looking" – a critically acclaimed but poorly rated TV series about gay men in San Francisco – introduced an HIV-positive character in season two. After all, the city was once the epicenter of the AIDS crisis and now has one of the nation's highest rates of HIV-positive gay and bi men.

The real revelation, though, was that Eddie, the character Daniel Franzese (already popular from his influential role in "Mean Girls") plays is poz, proud and body positive.

People with HIV are rarities on TV (the last series to have one was "Brothers & Sisters" in 2011), and when they exist there's usually a lot of stigmatizing, handwringing and self-loathing around them, with singular storylines that play like a "very special episode."

But "Looking" (and the season finale of "How to Get Away with Murder", in which Conrad Ricamora's character Oliver finds out he has HIV) broke the mold with an ordinary gay man who just happened to have HIV. Moreover, it was the first scripted television series to talk about PrEP, or Truvada, as pre-exposure prophylaxis.

"The brief conversation that we have in the Halloween episode happens in a way that I've heard PrEP come up amongst my friends… not too preachy," Franzese told Plus magazine. "I really like the way that it's handled."

So did I. Eddie is sexy, healthy and – this is important – romantically pursued by an HIV-negative character. So that the pair can have sex without either of them worrying about transmission, the love interest begins a regimen of PrEP, the daily HIV prevention pill that the iPrEx Study proved can reduce HIV infection by up to 99 percent when taken properly.

The fact that "Looking" handled PrEP in this manner may mean the tide has turned on PrEP, a prevention method initially debated – and actually lobbied against – by some gay men (notably AIDS Healthcare Foundation's Michael Weinstein, who argued it was a "party drug" that would make users ditch condoms).

Today in many gay communities, on TV or otherwise, we're increasingly hearing one thing about PrEP: It's changing everything.

Both the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have begun recommending PrEP to gay and bi men and transgender women, in hopes of stemming the tide of the 50,000 new HIV cases each year in the U.S.

It's not the numbers, though, that are interesting. It's the sociocultural changes we see from PrEP. The social dynamics among gay men are changing. I've talked to dozens of men who are dating across the viral divide: poz and negative guys dating each other, marrying each other, becoming what romantics call "magnetic couples." (The rest of us call them serodiscordant couples, partnerships in which one is poz and one isn't.)

Between "treatment as prevention" (a method in which someone with HIV suppresses the amount of HIV in their blood, or their viral load, to "undetectable" levels and thus can no longer transmit HIV) and PrEP, many gay men are now having sex without the fear that they can transmit, or acquire, HIV, whether or not there are condoms involved.

My friend Alex Garner, who conducts HIV awareness and prevention programs across the country, says this has impacted how gay men now relate to each other because it's eliminated a key emotional obstacle to love that gay men have had since the late 1980s: fear.

Like a lot of guys, Alex used to almost exclusively date other HIV-positive men, but PrEP has changed that. He told Plus magazine that the possibility of having a real relationship with someone who is serodiscordant seems much more realistic now because PrEP is available – and it changes the relationship too.

Despite Weinstien's rants, PrEP really doesn't seem to be really used by wanton sluts who want to man-whore about town. (But, if it is, more power to the users, I say; the LGBT rights movements was built on sexual liberation, and PrEP is to gay men in 2015 what birth control was to feminists in 1970, but I digress.)

In fact, when someone is considering PrEP because their partner has HIV, it's very often a sign that they love and want to build a future with that person, the exact opposite of one-night stands popular in hookup culture.

Weinstein's ditching condoms theory seems inaccurate. At least one study from Brown University found that many HIV-negative men in relationships already ditch condoms because they want more intimacy in their relationship (and they do so even when one or both of the guys are having sex outside of that relationship).

Over half the men in that study said they'd go on PrEP, which is good because we know from another study out of Emory that nearly 70 percent of all new HIV transmissions for both gay and bi men and transgender women occur in a primary relationship. But the Brown researchers are quick to note: These men and women are willing to go on PrEP, not to suddenly ditch condoms once they're on PrEP, but to protect themselves because they already ditched those condoms long ago.

Today, PrEP is appearing in dating profiles and on apps like Grindr and Scruff. Even sites aimed at HIV-positive men, like BarebackRT, report that HIV-negative men are now posting profiles there and touting that they are on PrEP. For generations of men and trans women who've lived in fear of HIV, suddenly having a prevention pill is a godsend. That it's mired in controversy is no surprise; birth control was once as well for many of the same concerns.

But the bottom line is that Truvada as PrEP is one option, one of the best we have available today. Like birth control pills, though, it isn't for everyone. Soon we'll have a rectal microbicide, injectable pre-exposure prophylaxis, vaginal rings, and more. And when we do, I hope the writers of "Looking" get at least a tiny footnote in history for breaking ground on TV and for having helped destigmatize PrEP for a generation of LGBT viewers.

Diane Anderson-Minshall is editor in chief of Plus magazine, the HIV Plus Treatment Guide mobile app, and HIVPlusMag.com. This column is a project of Plus, Positively Aware, POZ, The Body and Q Syndicate, the LGBT wire service. Visit their websites – hivplusmag.com, positivelyaware.com, poz.com and thebody.com – for the latest updates on HIV/AIDS.

Hospice Program and Community Center Partner on LGBT Grief and Loss

In a six-week series on the stages of bereavement, Hospice of Central Pennsylvania is partnering with the LGBT Center of Central Pennsylvania on grief and loss support group for LGBT individuals.

The free group is 6:30–8 p.m. on Tuesdays beginning Oct. 6 at Hospice of Central Pennsylvania, 1320 Linglestown Road in Harrisburg.

"Like all of our support groups, our new LGBT group gives peers an opportunity to join together and talk about loss in a safe place," said HCP CEO Gil Brown. "The grief process is a unique journey for each person. We can make that journey a little easier when we connect with people who've experienced similar loss."

Throughout the years, HCP has seen greater interest in specialized support groups. Today, the organization offers groups that serve many demographics and types of loss, including those for young widows and widowers, widows and widowers ages 55 and older, adults who have experienced the death of a parent, individuals who have lost a child and children who have lost a loved one.

The LGBT support group will focus on the grieving process in meetings with peers led by an experienced bereavement counselor. The meetings' topics will include: stages of grief; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender bereavement resources; getting through the holidays and special occasions; religion and spirituality; self-care; and creating memorials.

Register: To attend, register by Tuesday, Sept. 29 with Luann at 717-732-1000 or lhinkle@hospiceofcentralpa.org.

Participants are not required to be connected to HCP to join. HCP plans to make the LGBT support group a permanent part of its bereavement offerings.

Ally in the Academy

By Trum Simmons
Harrisburg Area Community College

Progress Real or Imagined?

What a summer it was! And as we enter fall, people are still talking about what happened in South Carolina and at the U.S. Supreme Court in June and July.

The removal of the Confederate battle flag from the grounds of the state capitol in South Carolina surely was a major turning point for those on all sides of the issue. Notice I said all sides, not both sides, as I hope most folks began to see how complex and multi-layered that issue is.

And it was wonderful to hear President Barack Obama tackle racism head-on in his eulogy for the Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney, one of the nine members of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., killed in the July shooting. His eulogy should be mandatory reading for everyone.

And of course the SCOTUS decision on marriage equality was a huge moment for all members of the LGBTQ communities and their "straight" allies. (I can't help but put that word in quotes - many of the straight people opposed to the ruling are folks who live on a different plane of existence from the one you and I inhabit.)

And there again was Obama. Seeing his visceral joy over the SCOTUS decision and the White House lit up with the LGBT rainbow were powerful moments indeed.

So where are we now? Have we entered the Promised Land? Is this now heaven on earth? Obviously the fight for full rights for LGBT people needs to continue on so many fronts. Back to that battle flag—did the Civil War and Reconstruction end racism? Does anyone think all citizens and institutions now fully embrace civil and human rights for LGBT folks?

56% say more important to protect religious liberties than LGBT folks.

We are still in the middle of our country's evolving support of true equality for all our people. I'm not sure how much further we will be evolving or how fast the process will be.

If you believe that indeed the moral arc of the universe bends toward justice, perhaps we are seeing some positive movement, but I'm not so sure.

Polls over the summer showed just how far we have yet to go. A major poll on racial attitudes showed the country very much split along racial lines when it comes to how we are doing in so-called race relations. Many Americans believe we have actually slipped backward in the past couple of years.

And another major poll showed the country closely divided on the question of marriage. One thing that stood out to me was that 56% of people said it's more important for the government to protect religious liberties than to support the rights of LGBT folks. Now of course these polls must be taken for what they're worth, and we know that often the way questions are asked determines how people answer.

This brings me to my granddaughter, now 3 years old and continuing to be such a great joy in my life. I've written about Anya before and talked about how the country she is growing up in is in many ways better than the one I entered seven decades ago. I look at her and feel hope.

I also look at her and sometimes despair. We take great strides forward but then soon we are several steps back. Yes, that flag was taken down, and yes, the SCOTUS decision was a major win.

Yet there are millions of Americans who still don't understand what the Civil War was about. They carry on at length about the wonderfulness of their heritage, which yes, did include slavery, but that's not what their ancestors fought for, of course.

Sort of like the millions of well-meaning straight people who say they don't hate their LGBT brothers and sisters, it's just that the Bible says homosexuality is sinful, same-sex unions are not natural, or they just weren't brought up to support such values.

Students return to school in the fall to learn … what? I hope this year will see an increase in their ability to challenge outmoded ideas and traditions, to think for themselves and to understand and accept the wonderful diversity in the human community. I hope they will learn that we are all in this together, which should help us move closer to the goal of justice for all.

Trum Simmons is professor emeritus of English and advisor emeritus to HACC Allies.

Central PA's only LGBT guide.
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RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

Mike Huckabee

Lying for Jesus?

No one more rabid that a professional victim.

Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee called for civil disobedience to undermine the Supreme Court's ruling upholding same-sex marriage throughout the country.

Invoking Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Huckabee, a one-time Southern Baptist minister and former Arkansas governor, predicted resistance by pastors and county clerks around the country.

"They will go the path of Dr. Martin Luther King, who in his brilliant essay, the letters from a Birmingham jail, reminded us, based on what St. Augustine said, that an unjust law is no law at all," he told ABC's "This Week."

"And I do think that we're going to see a lot of pastors who will have to make this tough decision."

MCC column

By Rev. Lori Rivera, Pastor
MCC of the Spirit

Deadlines...

This is another one of those days when a deadline crept up on me. I "found" the email from *Central Voice* reminding me that my article is due today and I haven't even started.

There is so much we do in our lives, expectations we put upon ourselves and expectations we allow others to put on our plate that have a deadline - doesn't that word alone sound heavy or ominous?

For most of us, if we looked at our plates, we would find that they are already full, some of it isn't even our "stuff" and many times we forget what is on them. I'm beginning to believe that my forgetfulness and the forgetfulness of others is not a sign of age but a sign of a life that is way too busy, a life with too many deadlines. I'm hoping to overcome some my forgetfulness by using a "due" program on my phone.

When it comes to getting stuff done sometimes I think I should record my own sermons or advice to others so I can play it back to myself.

Recently I was talking to someone who was really angry with themselves because they forgot to do something. It wasn't a life and death issue but something they wanted to get done and then they did a really hurried job of getting something done. They berated themselves because of their forgetfulness and condemned themselves because they didn't get it done perfectly. My comment to them was "give yourself a break. God doesn't call us to perfection, God calls for us to do our best and be willing to serve." These words ring in my own ears as I recall the same scolding and condemnation of self when I forget to do something or don't get something done as I wanted it done.

We all need to give ourselves "a break". Many of us are our own worst enemy and are just too hard on ourselves. That doesn't mean I'm saying not do the things we need to do or the things we said we would do. We just need a different perspective. Maybe my "due" program will help me the most to see what are the priorities in my life and let the unimportant sit or pass it on to another.

Maybe then knowing my own priorities I'll be more ready to say "no" to someone who wants to put something on my plate that isn't one of my priorities.

Deadlines? Give yourself a break! Do what's most important (your priority) and leave the rest to someone else's priority list! Let it be their deadline and not yours or mine.

Blessings!

Episcopal House of Bishops Passes Key Marriage Resolutions

Pittsburgh Bishop Dorsey McConnell in spite of "significant theological reservations" will permit rituals...

Bishop McConnell

The House of (Episcopal) Bishops have approved two liturgies for trial use that will permit same-sex couples to be married in the Episcopal Church, beginning on the first Sunday of Advent of this year, reports Melodie Woerman, House of Deputies News.

The action came just days after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples can now be married in all 50 states. Eighty-five clergy and 88 Lay members in favor of the measure. Fifteen clergy and 12 Lay members, respectively, voted against the measure. Six members of each group were undecided.

The two liturgies, which were in Resolution A054, include a gender-neutral version of the current marriage service in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, as well as a version of a liturgy that was approved in 2012 for blessing same-sex unions that now also provides vows of marriage. These rites do not refer to "man and woman" or "husband and wife," but instead use "these persons" or "the couple" to refer to the two people being married.

The 2012 rite, known as "The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant," was amended to include improvements identified since it was permitted three years ago, and then was approved by the bishops.

The language of the existing marriage liturgy in the Prayer Book remains unchanged.

The two trial liturgies were adopted in accordance with Article X of the church's Constitution, as well as Canon II.3.6, which begins the process of amending the Book of Common Prayer. That action requires action by two successive General Conventions.

The resolution places the trial rites "under the direction and with the permission of the bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority or where appropriate, ecclesiastical supervision." It adds that all bishops will "make provisions for all couples desiring to be married in this church to have access to these liturgies."

Bishop Dorsey McConnell of Pittsburgh said that in spite of his "significant theological reservations" about the trial rites, he was in support of making them available. "We have to have this conversation," he said. "I dispute that we have been talking about this for 40 years. Most of that wasn't talking; it was a pitched battle. Now we maybe are actually able to talk and listen to each other."

The bishops also adopted Resolution A036, which makes changes to the marriage canons to permit clergy to use either the current Prayer Book marriage rite or one of the trial use liturgies when performing marriages.

After a moment of prayer, the resolution passed on a roll-call vote, with 129 in favor, 26 opposed and five abstaining.

The resolution also redefines the declaration of intent that couples must sign before being married in the church, to make the language align more closely with the vows the couple makes. The committee had heard testimony that the current declaration asks non-believers who are marrying a church member to declare they believe things about marriage that they do not believe. The revised declaration asks them to state that they understand the church's teachings about marriage.

The resolution also retains what is often called the discretion clause, which permits clergy to decline to solemnize or bless any marriage. A version of that clause has been a longstanding provision of the canons.

It also recognizes that there are some jurisdictions, including parts of Europe and dioceses in Latin America and the Caribbean, where clergy do not solemnize marriage. The resolution also makes explicit a provision for the blessing of civil marriage, which appears in the Book of Common Prayer but currently has no reference in church canons.

Bishop Gene Robinson, retired bishop of New Hampshire, who was the first openly gay bishop living with a partner to be ordained by the church, said during debate, "I think it is time for us to do this." He disagreed with Bishop Edward Little of Northern Indiana that the church's love and respect for gay and lesbian people was made clear in the Rite of Baptism. "We wouldn't have been clawing our way into this church if that was true," he said.

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central pa pride

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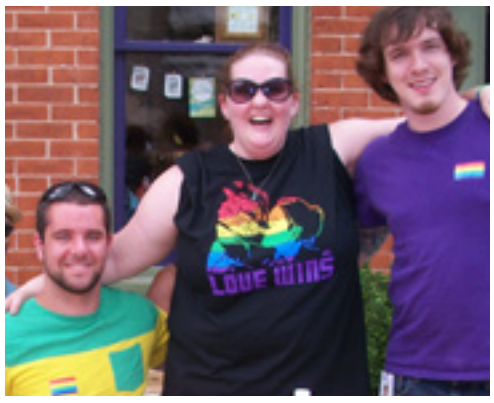

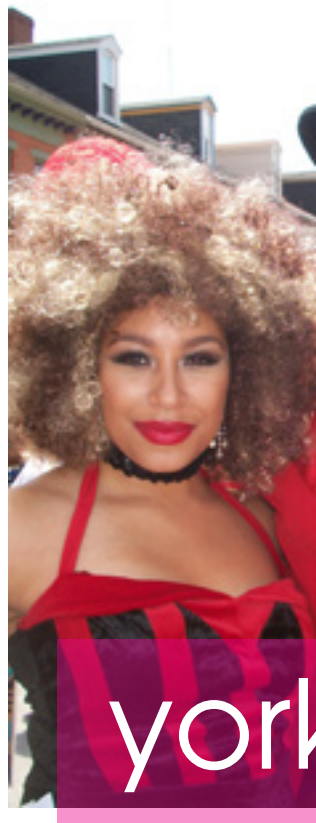

york

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pride around the region

The south central Pennsylvania region celebrated three Pride and Equality events, each unique. The longest running venue, **Central PA Pride Festival**, held sway on the beautiful banks of the Susquehanna River. **Lancaster Pride Festival** was held in Buchanan Park, a fitting location since many believe that Lancaster's James Buchanan, the 15th President of the United, was gay. In York, the second **Equality Festival**, named to reflect its mission of proclaiming "equality for all," not only the LGBT community, moved to a more stretched out location in the city's Royal Square neighborhood.

k equality fest

lancaster pride

Some of our brothers and sisters around the globe - Turkey, Jerusalem, Uganda, - faced different reactions to their proclamations of pride and dignity. See the following page for snapshots around the globe.

Uganda

Uganda's LGBT community celebrated Pride discreetly against a backdrop of risking violence, ostracisation from their families and media threats. Still activists orchestrated the country's biggest festival yet. "It's not a protest but a celebration," says organiser Richard Lusimbo of the fourth annual Uganda Pride, which includes film screenings, a cocktail party, a (discreet) parade and a Mr and Ms Pride contest. Because of security fears in a country where homosexuality remans illegal and homophobia is widespread, the events are by invitation only. Locations have been kept secret, with details circulated on private online networks.

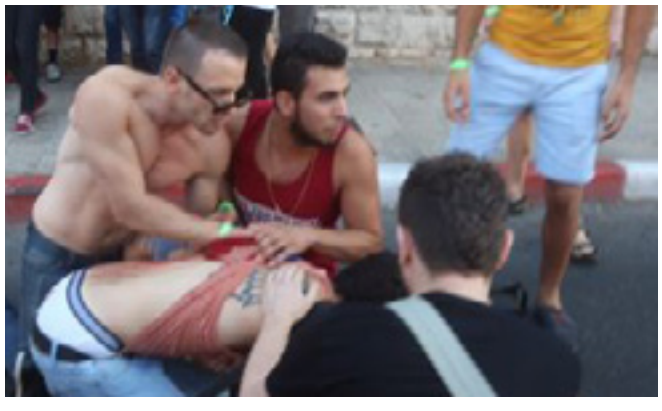
snapshots Pride around the globe

Chicago

The 2015 Pride Parade was briefly held up the afternoon of June 28 when several protestors from the activist group #BlackOutPride staged a "die-in" at the corner of Halsted and Addison. Eight arrests were made in the incident, which held up the parade for about 15 minutes. The protestors said that they were seeking to call attention to issues that had been neglected by the LGBT community in the push for marriage equality. According to a statement released June 28 by #BlackOutPride, "Organizers of the die-in hope the protest will bring attention to the parade's origins as a political action meant to resist state violence. Organizers wish to amplify the voices of those silenced within the LGBTQ community, primarily those populations most impacted by state violence—trans people, women, people with disabilities and mental illness, Black and Brown folk, indigenous people, immigrants, sex workers and street youth."

Jerusalem

A photographer captured the moment an ultra-Orthodox man armed with a knife ran amok during Jerusalem's July 29 gay pride march, stabbing six people – one woman seriously – in the worst incident of homophobic violence in the city in a decade reports Peter Beaumont. Yishai Schlissel had recently been released from prison after serving 10 years for stabbing three people at a gay pride parade in 2005, police said. According to eyewitnesses, the attacker – named by a police spokesman as Yishai Schlissel – had hidden himself in a supermarket and waited for the march to arrive. They described seeing Schlissel, who had been released from prison three weeks earlier after serving a sentence for stabbing several people at a gay pride parade in 2005, run screaming through the crowd in a central Jerusalem street, stabbing people at random before being overpowered by police.



Turkey

The march started at Taksim Square near Gezi Park, which has been closed since its violent eviction on June 15. Since the eviction, not even one demonstration took place that did not encounter violent dispersal by Turkish police forces. The parade was the first public gathering that calmly dispersed, without a police attack. *Photos by ActivistStills*

Divine/Intervention:

Reflecting on "The Drag Queen of the Century"

By Debra Miller, Philadelphia Arts and Culture Correspondent

A compelling new bioplay by E. Dale Smith, which made its world premiere in July at Voyeur Nightclub (1221 St. James St.) in Philadelphia before moving to FringeNYC in August, considers the career, personal struggles, and public image of Glenn Milstead and his larger-than-life alter-ego Divine.

Touted posthumously as "The Drag Queen of the Century" by *People Magazine,* Divine enjoyed an international reputation as the outrageous counter-culture sensation who had come to prominence in such cult-classic films as *Pink Flamingos* (1972), *Female Trouble* (1974), and *Polyester* (1981) by fellow Baltimore native John Waters, a friend since their teen years. But Milstead, as the play indicates, sought to "change it up" by establishing himself as a legitimate and respected character actor, working without drag in more mainstream productions.

Conceived and directed by Braden Chapman (aka the popular Philadelphia drag queen Mimi Imfurst and the producer of *RuPaul's Drag Race Battle of the Seasons* tour), *Divine/Intervention* is staged as a sometimes funny, sometimes contentious, increasingly revealing and reflective conversation-in-a-mirror between the dual personalities of the performer on the night of his premature death in a hotel room in 1988. Weighing in at 375 pounds, Milstead, who was in LA at the time to appear in an episode of Fox TV's *Married . . . with Children*, died at the age of 42 from cardiac arrest, triggered by an enlarged heart and sleep apnia, just two weeks after the release of Waters' and his breakthrough film *Hairspray*, which would later become a hit Broadway musical.

Well-researched, deftly written, imaginatively staged, and sensitively directed, *Divine/Intervention* (presented by sbgProductions and Faux Real Entertainment) features outstanding performances by Ryan Walter as Glenn and Bobby Goodrich as Divine (Goodrich is also known for his drag persona Cleo Phatra, and for his costume designs, including the ones for this show, under the name of Bobby Fabulous). The actors' physical transformations into Glenn and Divine, and their resemblance to one another, are uncanny, as is their mastery in exposing the psychology and humanity of their real-life character(s), with biting wit and flamboyance, raw anger and pain, and profound empathy.

Walter, born only three years before Milstead's death, admits:

Before I started working on this show I didn't really know a lot about him. I had heard his name in passing, and had even had my own drag performances described as being like him, but I had no real idea of who he was or what he did. Now, having immersed myself in this world for the past several months, I see Divine as a revolutionary figurehead, someone who was on the edge of the art world, challenging all that we had grown so complacent with. His very nature forced us to confront ourselves in a way that no other performer had done at that time. I have immense respect for what he and John Waters were doing, they laid the ground work for so many different forms of performance and discourse and I am eternally grateful to them for pushing those boundaries.

He continues:

There are no words to express the joy I feel doing this part. I think this play tells an important story, one that is very close to my own heart. The struggle to claim our identity is within us all, but it is especially prevalent among drag queens, and having done drag myself I know how living that double life can mess with your head. I deeply empathize with Glenn's struggle to be recognized for himself and not just this larger-than-life character that he created. Add to that the fact that this is the first play ever really written about Divine and the reality of what it is to be a drag queen, and you can understand why I am so delighted to be a part of it. I can't wait to see how far we can go with it!

Bobby Goodrich in a promotional image for Divine/Intervention (Photo credit: Garrett Matthew)

Co-star Goodrich notes:

I have been compared to Divine since the first time I ever was in drag, and it always is the highest compliment! I was very lucky to get cast as Divine; not only is she one of my biggest inspirations in drag, this play is such a big part of Braden, who happens to be a close friend. So it was very special that he trusted me as his leading lady. I have only really done some rock shows with BRAT Productions since college, so this has been a lot of work getting into it.

All that hard work has obviously paid off. Goodrich goes on to explain:

I was told all through college that I was too fat ever to be taken seriously on stage, a battle many larger actors and actresses go through. I started drag because I needed that performance outlet, and now look: here I am starring as one of my idols in a beautiful play with a run in New York, and it's DIVINE!

Though Chapman had known both actors prior to the show, they nonetheless had to audition for their roles. The director acknowledges:

I think that we got very lucky finding such incredible actors who look exactly like each other. Actually in the beginning I was going to play Divine, but my training is in directing and I had this deep down gut instinct that said I had more to offer as a director than as an actor. I haven't done it in a while, so it's been great to dust it off and put that part of my brain to work. It's my true calling. The drag just pays the bills.

Chapman's lead actors are supported in the play by voice-overs of interviews and news reports, and by a fine ensemble that portrays the significant people from Milstead's life--his father (portrayed by Dean Carvin), his ex-lovers (Terrell Green and Cosimo Mariano), and, of course, the young John Waters (Nicholas Scheppard)-who re-enact scenes of his life and career, while joking and laughing, loving and battling, and fighting the demons that plagued him.

For Chapman, *Divine/Intervention* clearly was a personal dream project, to pay homage to one of the most important influences in his life:

Divine means a lot of things to me. She's been an inspiration--a reminder to be unapologetic, and that drag isn't about being pretty, it's about being outrageous at times and quiet and poignant at other times. I draw most of my inspirations from the two divines--the drag queen, of course, and the Divine Miss M (Bette Midler).

If you didn't see *Divine/Intervention* in Philly or NY, you still might get a chance to catch it in the future. According to Chapman, the team would love for the show to run in other cities and is presently in talks to travel it.

(L) Divine/Intervention director Braden Chapman. (R) Chapman as Mimi Imfurst

(Photo credit: Angie Bordeaux) (Photo credit: Jonathan Hernandez)

By John Folby, History Project Steering Committee

2015 regional Pride events are history but conversations among those who attended remain ongoing.

Several sentiments are a common theme in these chats: Pride was like a family reunion; I saw so many people I haven't seen for years but I didn't see so and so. And where was (?), he always drives down for Pride.

The same questions about missing people keep emerging with each History Project interview.

Where's Will ? Where's Wes ? Where's Wendy ?

The Where Is (?) Game is an ongoing challenge to our local LGBT history. Each missing link represents an untold story, a lost memory represents a void in our mutual, historical existence in the region.

Larry Wilson, a former local bar owner and staunch History Project advocate, posts old pictures on several Facebook pages he created. He updates the pages and every new photograph posted generates conversations about missed people and their valuable histories.

Although it's preferable to hear someone's story in their own words, the anecdotal feedback gathered from Wilson's Facebook comments help the History Project piece together our local history. It's like a social media version of Where's Waldo, creating a process to collect and record histories of the missed, but not forgotten, through friends and colleagues.

One of Wilson's recent posts instigated an avalanche of memories and stories about a Harrisburg man who was not only a community character but a nationally known drag star performing with the Jewel Box Review, a traveling drag show that toured the country from 1939 into the 1960's.

Benedict Arnold Trautwine was born in Waldwick, New Jersey in 1917 and passed away in Harrisburg on October 12, 2003. Known by thousands of people as Wesley, local Facebook fans by the dozens began a chain of endearing stories and memories that clearly exemplify Wesley's impact in our local history.

Most of the feedback chatter is about Wesley's weekly weekend appearances in full drag at the Neptune Bar and Lounge formerly on North Street. There are dozens of pictures of Wesley in Wilson's collections but they fall short of the experience and memory of seeing Wesley in real time, holding court from his favorite Neptune barstool. A drink in one hand and an 18 inch cigarette holder in the other, elbow length white kid gloves, even in winter and little white eyelet cotton gloves in summer.

No matter what the season, or style of dress, every outfit included appropriately coordinated jewelry. One of Wesley's old friends said Wesley owned the Northeast's largest collection of rhinestone jewelry. Another said he owned every Bakelite bracelet, necklace, brooch and earrings ever produced.

Benedict Arnold Trautwine, affectionately known as Wesley, in 1976.

Aside from his love of the best costume jewelry and couture, Wesley loved King Charles Spaniels and owned several of them spanning as many decades. He would only select pure black puppies from the litter and they were always named Dennis.

Dog walking is also a topic of Wesley lore. He's be seen walking Dennis in the morning before heading off to work at the Department of Transportation, impeccably dressed in business attire. Later on at night he'd walk his pet in old housecoats and slippers. City residents were accustomed to the dog walking attire but to outsiders his garb had incredible shock value.

Sometimes on weekends the look included not only the floral housecoat but occasionally full makeup because Wesley hadn't remembered to remove it before bed. Wesley was truly a vision. Since Wesley lived and worked in the city, he walked to work but was well known by all the taxi drivers because he usually called for a cab to shuttle from home to the Neptune and back again on weekends, even though he lived nearby.

It's unfortunate that Wesley isn't here to tell the true story but there are several versions of a story about Wesley taking a tumble at home one night, breaking a leg and showing up at the Harrisburg Hospital ER in full drag. Supposedly there are retired hospital employees who still talk about the event. It's also unfortunate that Wesley left the party and can't tell us all of his stories in his own words.

Meanwhile, the History Project moves forward and would love for you to contact us to share the history of an LGBT person in your life experience who is no longer around. Tell someone about the project. Ask them to share their history. If they're reluctant, remind them that everyone has extraordinary stories to share. Ask them to help us connect the missing links.

Bold New LGBT Fiction Titles Available

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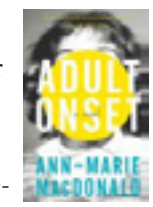

Trying to meet the many demands of her aging parents, raise two young children while her partner is often traveling for work, and finish her third novel, Mary Rose MacKinnon has her hands full. The frazzled insanity of parenthood coupled with writer's block is pushing her to the edge, and a flare-up of mysterious physical symptoms she remembers from childhood add to her confusion and dread. Publisher's Weekly says this "…strong narrative is a compelling examination of the loneliness and the often-absurd helplessness of being a parent of young children".

After the Parade by Lori Ostlund

Forty year-old Aaron leaves his controlling partner of 20 years for a new life in San Francisco. He takes a job as an ESL teacher and lives in a garage beneath a constantly quarreling straight couple. Thinking about his past, his recent relationship and his present search for new connections gives the story different converging threads that results in an "authentic, empathetic representation of life as it truly is", according to Kirkus Reviews. Library Journal says "at its heart, it's about Aaron discovering his independence and learning who he is when there is no one else to define him.

Best Gay Erotica 2015. Edited by Rob Rosen

The publisher says this collection "is filled to the page-turning brim with fantastic tales of fire dancers and TV repairmen, of hunky painters and electricians and magicians, solo sex, duo sex, and sweat-soaked triple onslaughts".

Best Lesbian Erotica 2015. Edited by Laura Antoniou

Cleis Press says "these scenarios of finding lust backstage at a USO show, a young woman tempting Athena herself and a couple becoming the in-flight entertainment, this collection of women on the prowl will take over your fantasies".

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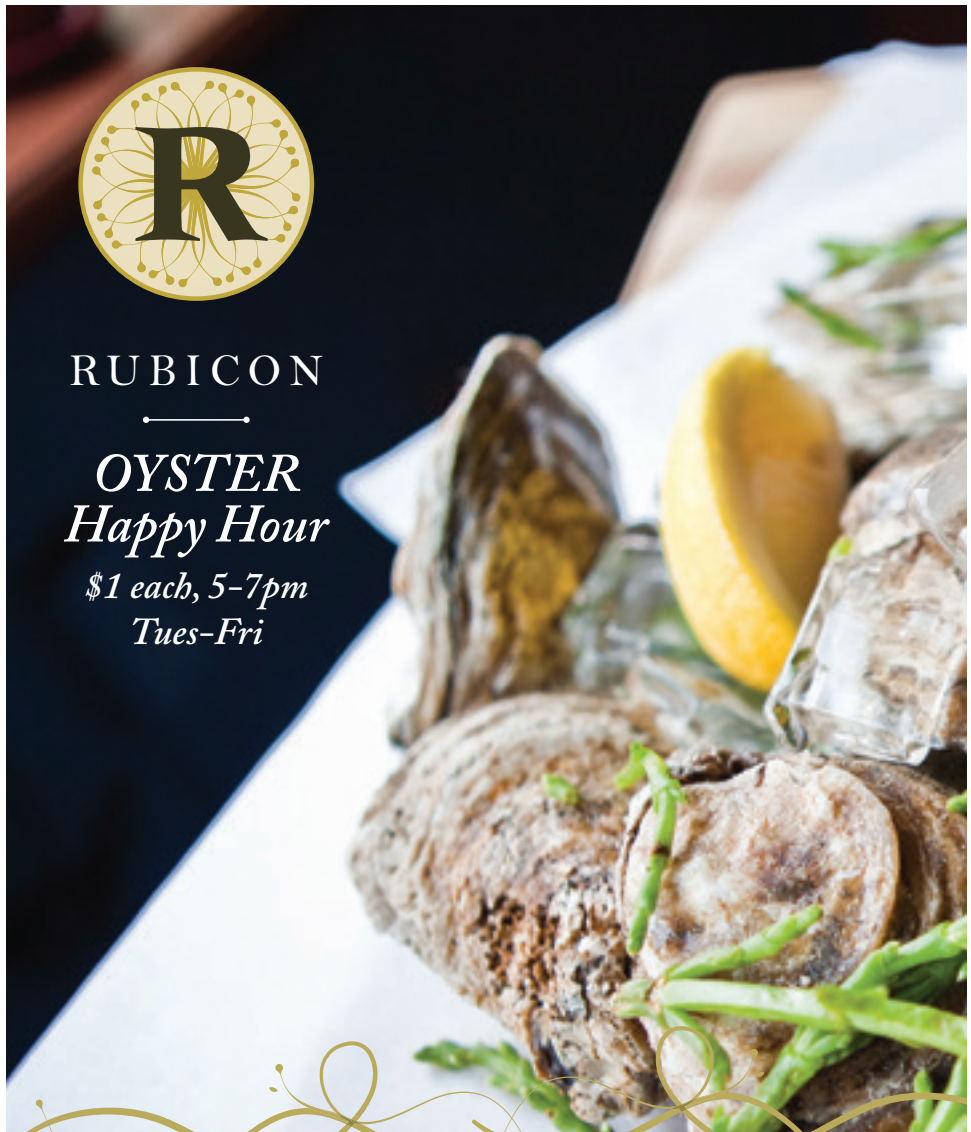
Alex Reber - T.L. Waid & Carla Christopher

LGBT center

Fall Achievement Benefit (FAB) is a key source of funding for The LGBT Center of Central PA. For information on The LGBT Center or to become a sponsor or advertiser of FAB 2015, please email fab@centralpalgbtcenter.org or call 717-920-9534.



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LIVE AT ROSE LEHRMAN

Kinsey Sicks Spoofs Reality TV

By Central Voice

"It's a hilarious Reality TV spoof," Bemn Schatz, one of the four Kinsey Sicks, tells *Central Voice.*

The Kinsey Sicks performs Thurs., Sept. 24, 8 p.m. Rose Lehrman Arts Center. Harrisburg Area Community College when the girls bring "America's Next Top..." to the region.

The New York Times called them "The hottest ticket in town ... taking the cabaret world by storm ... voices sweet as birdsong." Spawned in San Francisco over 20 years ago, America's Favorite Dragapella® Beautyshop Quartet has served up a feast of music and comedy in over 40 states, Mexico, Canada, Europe, and Australia at performing arts centers, music venues, and comedy festivals in every kind of town you can imagine.

"Our show is wicked commentary but funny 'til it hurts," Schatz says. He's the group's lyricist and promises "naughty parody" in his original songs. Schatz thinks Reality TV is "sadly irresponsible" even though the group had their own chance to mount a show of their own.

He cites the common yarn about humor - that it's often based on frustration and anger. "Humor helps us express anger," Schatz says, "but Reality TV in many of its forms is pretty darn ugly, they don't have to pay a lot, and they manipulate storylines so it's anything but reality."

Comedy geeks know that in 2001, The Kinsey Sicks starred in their own Off-Broadway show at New York's legendary Studio 54. That production received a nomination for a Lucille Lortel Award (the off-Broadway Tony) for Best Musical and a Drama Desk nomination for Best Lyrics. Their award-winning a cappella singing, sharp satire, and over-the-top drag have earned The Kinsey Sicks a diverse and devoted following.

Harrisburg City Gallery Walk

"Towards a New/Old Architecture," a joint venture presented by The Art Association of Harrisburg, Susquehanna Art Museum, Historic Harrisburg Association, and the American Institute of Architects, Central PA Chapter, debuts on Gallery Walk, with companion exhibitions at AAH, SAM and HHA.

The 27th Annual Harrisburg Gallery Walk is Sun., Sept. 13, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Twenty-five exhibition sites are participating.

The suggested route for Gallery Walk:

The Art Association of Harrisburg, 21 N. Front St., where "Structures II, " the Fall Membership Exhibition, will be on view, with lively music provided by Hemlock Hollow in the afternoon and an awards ceremony at noon.

Next is the John Harris/Simon Cameron Mansion at 219 S. Front St., followed by the art studio at 117 Locust St. of Bryan Molloy, who coincidentally enough is working on a large painting of none-other than John Harris himself!

St. Stephen's Episcopal Cathedral's Mission Gallery at 221 N. Front St. is just around the corner, and then the route back-tracks to Penn National Insurance, where AAH artist Claire Giblin's abstract paintings will be on view. Whitaker Centre for Science and the Arts at 222 Market St. is next, followed by the historic Salem United Church of Christ at 231 Chestnut St., where watercolours by Thom Glace will be shown. The Latino-Hispanic-American Community Centre, 1319 Derry St., will be far easier to visit this year than last, with the Mulberry Street Bridge repaired and re-opened!

Capital Area School for the Arts Charter School in Strawberry Square will present their CASA Student Art Exhibition. Stash, in its new location at 210 Walnut St., is next, with Old City Hall at 423 Walnut St. just up the street. On to Gallery@Second, 608 N. Second St., with the art studio of Alice Gardner-Bates next door at 612 N. Second, Second Floor.

Little Amps coffee roasters at 133 State St. is new to Gallery Walk this year, but Mangia Qui/Suba at 272 North St. is happily back again, featuring the art of Andrew Guth, and brunch! The State Museum at 300 North Street will conclude The Art of the State on September 13 with "Artists' Conversations," and right across the street is the elegant 704 Lounge.

Heading west to Front Street, City House B&B at 915 N. Front is the next stop on the Walk, followed by Historic Harrisburg at 1230 N. Third St., with historic architectural renderings by Clayton Lappley on display. Midtown Scholar with the Yellow Wall Gallery, 1302 N. Third, is just up the street. Brand-new this year is the spectacular Millworks, with over 30 working artists' studios, as well as a farm-to-table restaurant and gallery.

Just beyond the Millworks is the new Susquehanna Art Museum, 1401 N. Third, which will showcase the major exhibition in the "Towards a New/Old Architecture" joint venture. Architects from 12 locations across Pennsylvania will display large photos of their top projects, along with maquettes and renderings, as well as interactive installations.

Charles Feathers' Gallery on Green is located at 1606 Green St, featuring varied works by local artists.

The Governor's Residence at 2095 N. Front is quite a hike but well worth the effort, with artists working "en plein air" in the beautiful Residence gardens throughout the afternoon and an exhibit curated by Rob Evans on view inside, featuring works by members of The Pennsylvania Art Experience. The route will conclude with two new venues: Dixon University Centre, 2986 N. Second St., and Art at the Manor, 2917 N. Front St. At Dixon, students' work from Slippery Rock University and Kutztown University will be showcased, and at Art at the Manor, works by Central PA artists will be featured.

No Last Call, Harrisburg's only "Street Band," will be performing along the Gallery Walk route throughout the day.

Info: www.artassocofhbg.com

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Pine Street Presbyterian Church • Little Amps • Mangia Qui & Suba
The State Museum Of Pennsylvania • 704 Lounge • City House B&B
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Terry Drew Karanen

Voice Columnist Authors Self-Help Book

Central Voice columnist Terry Drew Karanen recently published "How to Find your Vision and Get a Life."

Karanen tells *CV* that the premise of the book "is to show people a simple, step-by-step method to create a life truly worth living by developing a personal vision and mission statement."

Central Voice: Why is it difficult in today's world for people to focus on their life's vision?

Karanen: So MANY reasons! It can be a lack of self-esteem with roots in how we were raised, religious sanctions and what we think society expects of us.

CV: Examples?

K: We live in a very, very, VERY busy world! As a culture we subject ourselves to information overload, making it nearly impossible to focus on what's in front of us, let alone a life vision that may not be concrete or one that we don't believe we should have or can achieve.

CV: We're missing out?

K: We miss out by not recognizing our life's purpose and living our vision is simply our own complacency. We move from "being in the groove" to "being in a rut." While our lives may not be what we say we want them to be, we can easily find ourselves getting comfortable in our own discomfort. Remembering what we desire and focusing on our goals can move us out of the rut and back into the groove of who we are. Having a specific vision statement and mission statement is essential in doing that effectively.

CV: Is your book a map to feeling happy?

K: This book is not only a "how to" guide, but a living example of "how it's done." We each have our own answers. I hope my own story, including my failures, struggles and demons, can show others how we can all lift ourselves out of the lives we have settled for to the lives we can have that are truly worth living.

Baltimore Native First Transgender Person to Sing National Anthem at NBL

Soprano Breanna Sinclairé is the first transgender person to sing the national anthem at a Major League Baseball. She sang the anthem June 17 at the Oakland Coliseum. It was only the second game Sinclairé ever attended, but she was already a fan before she opened her mouth to sing at the A's LGBT Pride night.

"My boyfriend Michael is a baseball fan, and he took me to a Giants game recently," Sinclairé, 25, said. "I really enjoyed myself. I was surprised, since I've always been more into the arts. I've never really been into sports."

The classically trained soprano, who has a 4½-octave range, broke new ground before the A's game with the San Diego Padres. For Sinclairé, a native of Baltimore who is also the first trans graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's classical voice program, it's been a journey that has included many of the typical hardships of the transgender experience.

"I never thought I'd be here," the singer said the night she sang. "I'm trying to calm my nerves with meditation, but every time I see that jersey Michael got me to wear tonight, it reminds me I'm going to be singing for 30,000-whatever people. The biggest audience I've had before is 1,000, so you see where the nerves come from."

As the recent trans coming-out of Olympic gold medalist Caitlyn Jenner and her selection for ESPN's Arthur Ashe Courage Award suggest, the world of athletics is now beginning to open wider for trans people.

TransCentral PA Topics

By Joanne Carroll
president of TransCentralPA

To Pride or Not to Pride

August 2 will mark the end of the major Pride Celebrations in the Susquehanna Valley and TransCentralPA proudly participated in Lancaster, Harrisburg and finally York.

Each of the events had a dynamic all their own, and hopefully every participant and attendee enjoyed themselves.

What come next is by no means a rap on York for referring to their event as the Equality Fest, I am sure they had a good reason for that moniker.

However, for me, the event name has a hollow ring to it, because in my mind we are no closer to LGBT Equality in the Commonwealth than we ever were. Oh sure, the SOTUS ruled in favor of marriage equality, but in over half the states and here in Pennsylvania, you can get married on Saturday to your same sex spouse, but if you put your picture on your desk Monday morning you might be fired by the end of the work day.

I have two very dear female friends living in the greater Harrisburg area that were married In Massachusetts years ago. They are cisgender females who have been together for many years and they have yet to put a wedding picture on their respective desks because they fear the repercussions. Does that sound like equality to you, because it does not sound like it to me?

I have friends within TransCentralPA that are struggling to get by, some because they were terminated from employment once they tried to live authentically. I have several other friends in addition that are working in menial service jobs. They have college degrees, and should be working in higher paid technical and administrative positions. They are underemployed and only by living with a number of other trans-females in order to curb expenses.

How anyone in the LGBT community can honestly presume we were on a single-issue journey, gaining marriage equality is beyond my ability to comprehend. We do not have equal rights, and we all have a stake in this fight to end discrimination based on sexual preference, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.

So what are you going to do about it? Are you planning to sit back and let Equality PA fight this fight for us, or can you make the commitment right now to do something to help this cause.

One thing you can do right away is sending a letter to your senator or representative or even better, stop by his or her office. However, the best thing you can do is become a storyteller, because people can be given the statistics, they can hear all the arguments about why it is the right thing to do; but hearing about the pain and misery that we and many of our brothers and sisters are experiencing will make all the difference.

So tell yours or someone else's story, and keep telling it until we can truly participate in an Equality Fest.

Joanne Carroll is the current President of TransCentral PA. TransCentral PA is committed to providing advocacy and caring support for transgender individuals, their significant others, families, friends and allies. TransCentralPA also provides gender education and information to businesses, organizations, educational institutions and governmental agencies.

BRUSH IT OFF...

Narci: *Sophonda, you know that Rich Hedge Fund Guy, George Soros?*

Sophonda: Zorro?

No, "S" as in Soros.

That's what I said!

Oh shut up!

Anyway, his son Robert and wife Melissa Schiff Soros are getting a divorce.

Too much money? She wants a less flamboyant lifestyle? More yoga?

Too much, uh, well...they split after he began romancing actress/artist Meredith Ostrom.

She rolls around naked in paint to create artwork.

Now that's what I call "art innovation"!

Does she wax or is that, uh, part of the creativity?

You are so weird!

Like you didn't immediately think the same thing. Hypocrite!

Well, she may use her, uh, brush, to paint but let's remember that she also donates her art to causes close to her heart - Youth for Youth, an international children's charity, the Gilda Radner Cancer Research Center, and the World Childhood Foundation's annual auction.

And your point is?

My point is that we're all a little strange. Get over it. It's how we treat ourselves and others that counts, no matter what brush we use to paint our life.

Are you high?

Oh, shut up!

CUT IT OFF...

So, like, what's up with currently popular hairdo? Sophonda asks Narci.

That syle I call Hindu Hippie?

Hey, you better watch yourself, girl. The PC Police will slap a fine on you. you can't say Hindu Hippie!

I just did. Hindu Hippie! Hindu Hippie! Hippie! See, no PC Police in sight. I call it that because it looks like a combination of both cultures with one exception.

What's that?

That little dollop of what looks like cat poop right on the top.

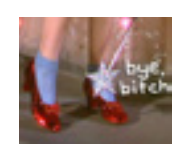
Oh that, yeah, weird.

And what's up with those 40-something A&F guys?

Those men wearing high school boy clothes three sizes too small even if they were still back in high school?

Yeah, them.

Nothing wrong with being sexy until the way you die. But girls please!



RED SLIPPERS...

And where were you on the night of...

What?

You heard me girl. What did you do with Judy Garland's red slippers? I want the $1 million reward!

I was nowhere near the Judy Garland Museum the night they disappeared. Besides, I was channeling Bette Davis that night. And the museum is in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. No wonder she wanted to get out!

Well, the 10-year anniversary of the theft was last month. If you have them you'd better give them back.

CHANNELING PALIN...

Did you know there was such a thing as *The Sarah Palin Channel?*

No.

You paid $9.95 a month. It's shutting down. Facebook will pick it up.

Facebook will pick up anybody.

CHURCH BELL...

Remember a while back when lightning struck a church bell tower in West York?

Yes, why?

Well, I have something to tell, a confession.

You're not Catholic. You can't go to confession. And Protestants never have anything to confess.

Not that way silly! I mean I think I may be responsible.

Why?

That night, when I saw the dark clouds swarming around, the cool air gave me a chill girl like running out of foundation cream, and, well, I wrapped myself up in a rainbow blanket, and starting lip-synching "Wedding Bell Blues." I was so sad. Everyone getting married all around me. And just as I was hitting a stellar high note, and my hands were above the covers, the lightning stuck!

And you think lighting struck the church bell because of you?

Yes. But remember that all those Professional Christians who think that they have a right to make all of us believe their version of life - and that what they believe must be reflected in every law and regulation and the Sandy flood is our fault? Asteroids too. Well, now - and I read it on the Internet so it must be true - we're being blamed for all the ugly stretch pants in the world.

Girlie, please! You need to get out more!

Okay, were shall we go?

One last thing...

Yeah?

I want to redecorate my living room. So, like, when I buy Antique White Paint, the paint is antique?

Oh, girl, you are damaged goods!

BAKE OFF! June 25 local celebrity guest judges, from the left, Rosemary Browne, President & CEO, Alder Health Services; Rev. Lori Hatch-Rivera, Pastor, MCC of the Spirit, Harrisburg, and Ted Martin, Executive Director, Equality Pennsylvania. The panel sampled 10 different desserts before deciding tying winners were Pat Dorner and Mary Nancarrow, who both baked Strawberry Rhubarb pies.

Chamber on the move

By Bill Krenz

Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

Business Equality Movement

With the recent Supreme Court ruling on same sex marriage, and momentum behind LGBT equality, many people ask if our work in achieving equality is done. While we paused to celebrate our victories earlier this summer, we realize that our work is far from done.

In Pennsylvania, many in the LGBT community fear for their jobs and livelihood.

Many in our community are not able to live authentically, fearing that they could be legally married on Saturday, post their wedding photos on Sunday, and legally fired on Monday for their sexual orientation. Basic protections for individuals who identify as LGBT are lacking not only in our state, but across much of the country.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, even though the Supreme Court's ruling has brought marriage equality to all 50 states, 31 states still lack clear, fully-inclusive non-discrimination protections for LGBT people, meaning that despite the ruling, LGBT Americans can get legally married but still be at risk of being denied services for who they are or risk being fired simply for getting married and wearing their wedding ring to the office the next day. Discrimination is a real and persistent problem for too many LGBT Americans. Nearly two-thirds of self-identified LGBT Americans reported experiencing discrimination in their personal lives.

The problems, says HRC, come up over and over again in the 31 states that don't have clear, fully-inclusive LGBT non-discrimination laws. There's the teacher who was fired after her principal found out she was planning to have a child with her partner. There's the lesbian couple asked to leave a park while shooting maternity photos. And the transgender woman shamefully denied housing at a shelter. Despite the incredible progress on issues from marriage to military service, these stories are far too common.

And that's why the LGBT business equality movement is as important today as it ever has been. Organizations like our chamber create a network that gives a greater voice to LGBT owned and allied businesses who understand that sustainable economic success and equality are inextricably linked. The business community has been a leader in shaping the conversation on LGBT inclusion, and today more than ever it is vital that we support businesses who have been helping to lead the charge in creating equality in our region and beyond.

Chamber Events:

July 8 a mixer was held at Hospice of Central Pennsylvania with board member Gil Brown giving an overview of the newest services provided by the organization.

The chamber participated in Harrisburg's Pride Festival of Central Pennsylvania and York's Equality Fest.

August 11 a mixer was held at the familiar LGBT Center of Central Pennsylvania, Harrisburg.

Sept. 16 is a mixer at the Neidig-Garber Science Center, Lebanon Valley College, Annville. This is the chamber's first visit to this college.

Oct. 14 Press and Journal Publications, publisher of *Central Voice*, will host a mixer at the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association, Harrisburg.

Info: www.cpglcc.org

LGBT community center coalition

By Louie Marven
Executive Director

Acting on Aging Survey

The LGBT Center has provided programming to support LGBT seniors for several years. Some high points include a couple of well-attended oldies dances, several community screenings and discussions of the film Gen Silent, and establishing regularly-occurring social and educational programs at the Center.

And did you know that the national award-winning LGBT Center of Central PA History Project, which has grown into its own well-developed program with strong volunteer leadership, even started out as a discussion on how to engage our region's LGBT seniors?

This year, the center's aging programs steering committee took a step back and asked for some feedback about what LGBT seniors have enjoyed and what activities they would like to see moving forward. Some of the feedback included the desire for social activities: outings, shared meals, and other kinds of opportunities to get out of the house and meet people.

> the current senior generation created the movement younger queers benefit from...

Respondents also wanted opportunities to participate in the community beyond our current regular programming on second Thursday afternoons and fourth Thursday evenings.

Unsurprisingly, much of the feedback reflected findings of recent national surveys on LGBT aging. In the report Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults (2010), the Movement Advancement Project (MAP) and Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) found that LGBT seniors face unique challenges to successful aging including the cumulative effects of a lifetime of stigma, the need to rely upon "families of choice" for care and support, and unequal treatment under laws and programs for older adults.

A more recent report from SAGE, Out and Visible (2014), found that LGBT seniors are more concerned than their non-LGBT counterparts regarding loneliness in older age and having support systems; LGBT seniors are more likely than their non-LGBT counterparts to rely on their own knowledge and education in planning for retirement; and that LGBT seniors want to spend their time volunteering but fear that their LGBT status would be a barrier to getting involved in volunteer activities.

Out and Visible also reports that about one in three (34%) LGBT seniors live alone, compared to 21% of non-LGBT seniors, and that 40% of LGBT seniors say that their support networks have become smaller over time, compared to 27% of non-LGBT seniors.

As far as the center's role in meeting these needs, expect some social programs around the central PA region beyond of our regular Thursday programs. As far as our whole community's role, let's consider aging issues as part of the much discussed post-marriage agenda. Not only did the current generation of LGBT seniors create the movement that all of us younger queers benefit from, but all of us – across gender identities and sexualities – are aging and need welcoming and affirming resources when we get there.

Reading Won't Ask for Criminal Records

The city of Reading recently dropped its practice of asking job applicants if they have a criminal record, joining Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Lancaster and Allegheny County in doing away with that section of its employment application.

The move is part of a national initiative to delay disclosure until later in the hiring process to give applicants a chance to be judged at least initially on their qualifications instead of their past record of criminality. The city can still conduct a background check.

Locally, State Rep. Patty Kim has called for similar changes in how job applicants are initially assessed. Last April 18 Kim co-chaired a public hearing in Harrisburg on expungement and prison reform. The focus of the hearing was two pieces of legislation that Kim sponsored. Essentially, the measures make more efficient the state's criminal justice system by reforming current laws regarding expungement of criminal records. "My bills are targeting non-violent offenders and those who had charges never fully processed through the system," Kim said. "The intent of these bills is to break the cycle and prevent people from going back to prison."

Kim's H.B. 908 would allow for the expungement of an individual's criminal record after seven years has lapsed from the completion of their sentence and they meet certain criteria. The legislation would require an individual seeking an expungement of their criminal record to appear before a judge to make the request.

The second bill, H.B. 909, would require the automatic expungement of an individual's criminal record for non-convictions or in cases in which the charges have been dismissed. Under the bill, repositories across the state that are responsible for maintaining information relating to criminal records would automatically expunge non-convictions or dismissed charges after 18 months. If the repositories would fail to do so, they would be held liable for civil damages.

Marriage Is the Law

cont'd from page one

County Economic Alliance also support the legislation.

Andrews

Kim

Sims

Marven

The Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce president Harry Young says support for the twin measures "makes good sense economically for both small businesses and large corporations. "The business community recognizes the importance of nondiscrimination legislation. Inclusive policies are key to attracting and retaining the best and brightest."

Both bills have bipartisan prime sponsors. The House version has 93 co-sponsors including 12 Republicans. In a March 2013 poll of both Democratic and Republican voters commissioned by Equality PA and administered by Susquehanna Polling and Research, respondents supported Pennsylvania non-discrimination bill by a margin of 72%.

"The day couldn't get better unless there was a big fat rainbow in the sky," said PA State Rep. Patty Kim, as she addressed the crowed of about 50 on the steps of the Capital June 26.

It`s the law of the land," said Philadelphia County State Representative Brian Sims. Openly gay, Sims has been working with members of the legislature on support for the twin anti-discrimination measures.

Louie Marven, executive director, LGBT Center of Central PA, says, "It's great that queer people who want to get married will be able to do so regardless of where they live in the U.S." He too advises that it's now time "to turn all the attention and resources that have been poured into the marriage equality movement into supporting the most vulnerable of our communities." He means measures like HB/SB 300. "It has to do with protecting all LGBT people. Everyone needs to be able to earn a living and find a home. If discrimination takes place we need to have legal recourse."

In nearby Maryland, Democratic presidential candidate and former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley has called for the addition of LGBT employment and housing protections in federal law following the top court's marriage ruling. O'Malley said. "While this is a major step forward, our fight for equality continues. In a majority of states, gay and lesbian employees can still be denied job opportunities or fired solely based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Twenty-eight states also lack laws banning discrimination in housing."

Why is the push to pivot towards other issues important?

Fears are that with the achievement of marriage equality, donors and volunteers will peel off the movement. For example, within days of the Supreme Court decision Equality Maryland Foundation chair Isabella Firth was already seeing a drop-off in funds. She noted in the organization's financial statement that funding "dwindled" after Maryland voters in 2012 upheld the state's same-sex marriage law and, later, the passage of a transgender rights bill.

The financial crisis prompted the lay off Carrie Evans, who had been the organization's executive director since November 2011. Firth said their annual budget in recent years ranged between $200,000 and $300,000 and was now in jeopardy and, at press time, Firth said the board was "researching" how much money it needs to raise in order for Equality Maryland to remain open.

One local activist hopes the momentum continues.

Although elated about the marriage ruling, John Folby, who writes The History Project for *Central Voice*, says, "We must continue to keep these measures like HB/SB 300 on our radar."

He advises that the LGBT community "must vote when it's time to get out the vote, remind state legislators that our vote means something and that we demand protection in employment and public accommodations."

Folby

Folby does not want to "pass the baton to the next generation of advocates and activists. We want to see basic civil rights protections provided in our lifetime."

At press time, Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and Rep. David Cicilline (D-R.I.) introduced the Equality Act, marking the next major fight for the LGBT community after the Supreme Court legalized marriage equality last month.

The legislation would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes, which currently consists of race, color, sex, religion and national origin. in Congress of an LGBT Civil Rights bill known as the "Equality Act".

The legislative remedy is in it's initial stages and there is no solid consensus among advocates on the measure because such legislative maneuvers could open up the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Those who favor such a move would amend that existing law to include gay rights. Those opposed fear opening the Equality Act open the door for unintended amendments by those seeking to restrict existing civil rights while also opposing additional protections covering the gay community. In support of amending the existing federal civil rights law, a recent Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) ruling essentially confirmed that such protections already exist. Amending the federal civil rights act would codify the ruling.

**At press time, there was a move afoot to refashion HB300/SB300 into a newer piece of legislation to be introduced in the legislation process.*

In Pennsylvania:

The Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC has supported an update to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act since 2009, said Christine Brindle, director of communications and outreach.

In a letter, the Harrisburg chamber outlined four main reasons for its position:

All individuals should have the right to employment, housing and public accommodation regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Discrimination on any basis, including sexual orientation, must not be condoned and is considered unacceptable behavior in society and specifically in the workplace.

States surrounding Pennsylvania and many municipalities within the Commonwealth have already implemented ordinances that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Companies throughout the United States have implemented similar policies in order to increase their retention and attraction of talented employees.

The York County Economic Alliance this week said it supports passage of the Pennsylvania Fairness Act.

"The York County Economic Alliance is dedicated to growing York County's economy, which is in part accomplished by ensuring that all Pennsylvanians are able to fully participate and have equal protections in the workplace, housing, and business and government services," Janelle Black, the alliance's advocacy manager, wrote in a Facebook post on Monday.

"The expansion of current protections, to include sexual orientation and gender identity, is a simple approach. It ensures non-discriminatory treatment, allowing LGBT Pennsylvanians to be treated exactly as other protected categories are already treated and have been treated for decades," she added.

The Lancaster Chamber of Commerce & Industry doesn't have a formal position yet, but will be discussing LGBT protections during an advocacy committee meeting Friday, according to advocacy director Heather Valudes.

Staff at the Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce didn't return calls seeking comment.

Same-day Voter Registration Proposed

By Central Voice

Voting rights advocates recently joined State Rep. Kevin Schreiber (D-York) and State Rep. Bizzarro (D-Erie) to propose a change in the state's voter registration law.

"State law still requires residents to register to vote at least 30 days before an election," Bizzarro said. "This antiquated system is inconvenient and deters many Pennsylvanians from exercising their right to vote. We now have the technology to make voting more accessible statewide, and I believe we should take advantage of it.", Bizzarro said.

The May 19 Primary election had a 19% participation rate of eligible voters under the current method of voter rules which require a 30-day advance registration. "State law still requires residents to register to vote at least 30 days before an election," Bizzarro said. "This antiquated system is inconvenient and deters many Pennsylvanians from exercising their right to vote. We now have the technology to make voting more accessible statewide, and I believe we should take advantage of it."

Twelve other states, in addition to the District of Columbia, allow for same-day voter registration. Seven of the 10 states with the highest voter turnout in last fall's midterm elections have same-day voter registration programs. In addition, there have been no documented cases of voter fraud as a result of same-day voter registration.

Co-sponsors of the legislation, House Bill 13, Schreiber and Buzzaro want to allow Pennsylvanians to register to vote at their polling place on election day, provided they supply specified proof of identification and their current address. They would then complete a provisional ballot, which would only be counted after the commonwealth's Department of State approved the voter registration application. Current law requires residents to register to vote at least 30 days before an election, which Schreiber said reduces the number of people who can vote.

"There is a percentage of our population whose right to vote us impeded simply by geography, residence and employment," Schreiber said. "We are an incredibly transient society, and by placing Election Day on a traditional work day, we limit the window of time individuals have to get to the polls." Schreiber said the bill would open voting to more people and lead to higher registration numbers and more turnout.

"After an only 19 percent turnout for the recent Primary Election, we should be doing all we can to increase the number of voters in our state and same-day registration is one way to achieve that," Schreiber said "This bill will allow more Pennsylvanians to exercise their constitutional right to vote."

Supporters of the legislation include Zach Hause, director, Central Pennsylvania Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO; Barry Kauffman, executive director, Common Cause Pennsylvania; and Paige Lower, community organizer, Pennsylvania Working Families. The measure is now in the House State Government Committee, where it awaits further consideration.

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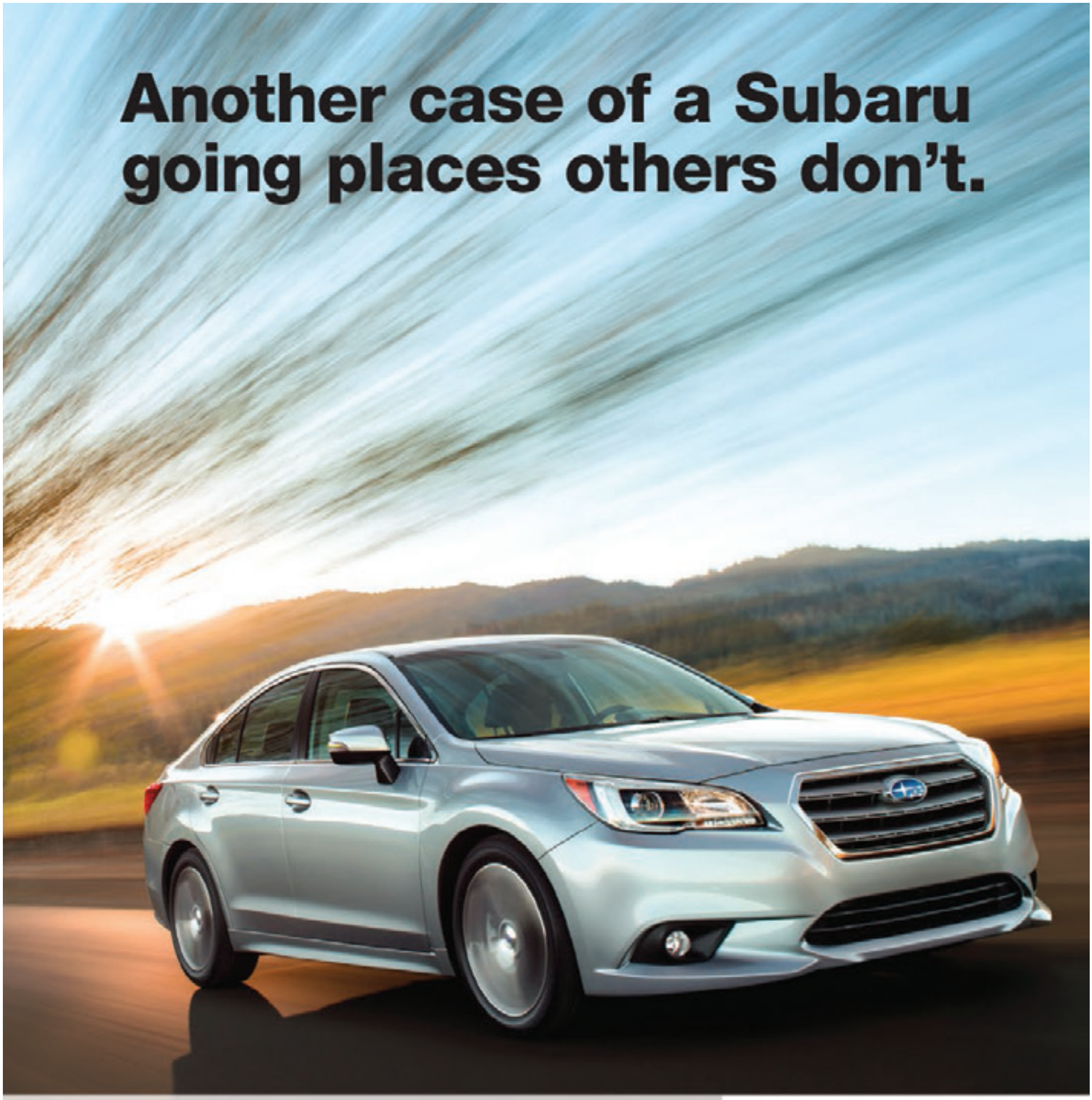

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